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# THE SPHERE

Vol. CLXIV No. 2145 — WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC — MARCH 1 1941


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THE SPHERE
With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"
The Empire's Illustrated Weekly
London, March 1, 1941

**THE WHOLE PROVINCE OF CYRENAICA PASSES INTO BRITISH HANDS: THE COMMANDER OF THE AUSTRALIAN TROOPS AT BENGHAZI TAKES OVER THE TOWN FROM THE ITALIAN MAYOR (IN CENTRE), THE BISHOP (ON LEFT), AND OTHER CIVIC AUTHORITIES**

Without a struggle, Benghazi, capital of Cyrenaica, surrendered to the victorious forces of General Wavell on February 7. It is stated that Graziani offered no opposition to the Imperial forces because he did not wish to see the town and its inhabitants destroyed by land and air and sea bombardment: if this were indeed the case, German airmen have since shown fewer scruples in this respect than the Italian Marshal. Whatever the cause, however, the citizens of Benghazi have displayed very little antipathy towards their conquerors. At the handing-over ceremony, in fact, the Australian forces taking part received quite a considerable ovation from the inhabitants of the Cyrenaican capital, as the pictures reproduced elsewhere in this issue indicate. The illustration given above shows the Australian officer who was in command of the Australian forces, and to whom the town was surrendered by the civic authorities, with the Italian Mayor and the Bishop at Benghazi

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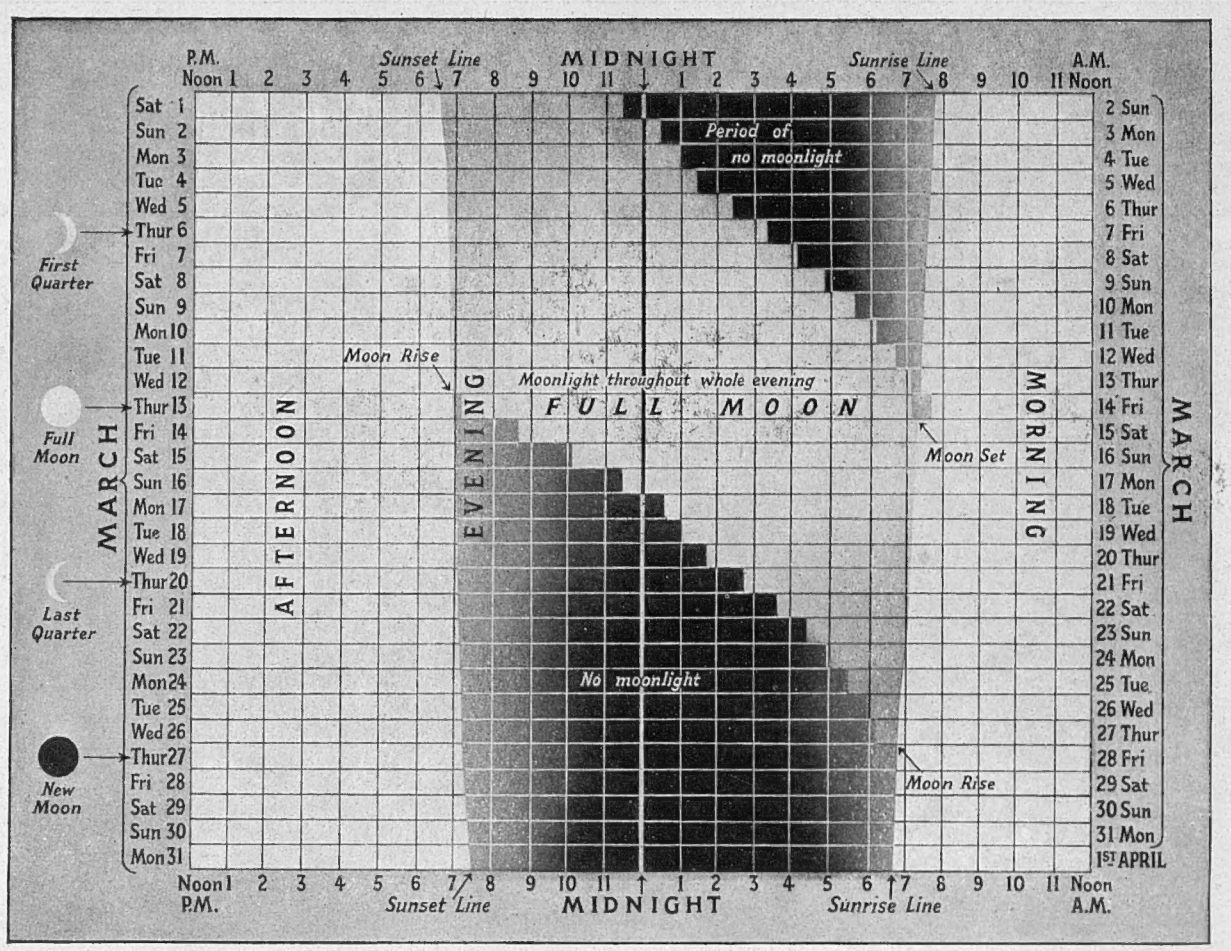
# A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 78

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

**WAR SCRAP-BOOK.**—If only there were time! With that commodity, what a war scrap-book I should have made—a book to make the gods weep (and men with a sense of humour crack their ribs with laughing) over human frailty! I should have collected a selection of the prophecies and pronouncements of statesmen in Europe who have, many of them, moved to other spheres—prophecies falsified, pronouncements which time (and no long time either) made highly comic. I should have collected the "authoritative reports" of American journalists and war correspondents—reports which exploded and vanished in a vapour that thinned in a few hours. I should have a goodly list of nostrums for our salvation and health and protection, all of which are dead and forgotten as the medical remedies of Jacobean quacks, put out by our leaders on the Home Front. I should have a score of headings by political pundits for a "new order" when peace comes. And—most instructive and stimulating of all—I should have a varied assortment of the red-hot topics of Press and orators which had the chief news-value interest for a week or a month at a time during this war. When father says "turn," we all turn—and to-day again we have all turned to invasion. How many words have been written and spoken by how many publicists and spouters about invasion and the Home Guard? Who would dare to compute the number within a margin of error of 10,000,000 words? Is invasion nearer, when invasion as a red-hot news item is restored by officialdom to the first place among topics for the public? Sometimes I doubt. Often I find it difficult—muddled as our minds have become by sacred and profane propaganda—to distinguish between what Governments wish their peoples to believe and their enemies to believe.

**THIS INVASION BUSINESS.**—Whatever I may think of Hitler's predicament and problems, all reason tells me that his chance of succeeding in an invasion of Britain has slowly but steadily declined since May 1940. What he accomplished in Holland, he accomplished under conditions favourable to himself which no other invaded country in the world could produce to-day—surprise, a terrain which is one vast landing-ground, disguised friends and partisans in every village, organised and armed to help him. In England to-day? A year of preparation has gone to our defences, we have command of a salt-estranging sea between, we have established moral control in the air, we have four million trained soldiers straining at the leash to bash his invaders in every little tree-girt, hill-shadowed, stiff-hedged field. What are his chances of repeating his Dutch success of the spring of 1940 in the England of the spring or summer of 1941? Hitler has earned many opprobrious titles, but he is not strategically a fool—indeed, he is rather a cautious chess-player. If the invasion of Britain within a year is *our* idea of the only way in which he can win the war or stave off total defeat, it may not, even to-day, be his. It is not certain that he has not already written that gamble off. He wants to keep our troops and fleets in Britain and British waters and over British skies. We perhaps want him to think we are doing so, strictly to the letter. The return of the invasion scare to-day, so red-hotly, would be the more puzzling if we all believed that Governments were composed of simple-minded innocents. But we don't. Meanwhile, in the ungrammatical and ugly old official slogan: "We've got to be prepared"—and we may add this latest invasion scare to our list of red-hot topics in our scrap-book of the Very Great War. Who would dare to say, even from an armchair, that invasion is a myth? Did not Bonaparte lose his reason, as in the end all dictators do, and butt his head against the icy wall of Moscow?




**"THE SPHERE" MOONLIGHT CHART FOR MARCH**

A glance at this diagram will immediately show how perceptibly the days are lengthening and the nights shortening. The first of the month has no moonlight after midnight, the first quarter making its appearance in the sky on the night of the 6th. A week later, on the 13th, the full moon illuminates the sky during the whole of the night and the last quarter will be visible on the 20th. The remaining eleven days bring with them ever-increasing periods of darkness, although the nights are now perceptibly shortening

*A limited number of these charts will be supplied free of charge on application to the Publisher, "The Sphere," 32-34, St. Bride Street, London, E.C.4, but 2½d. in stamps must be enclosed with the application*

**MR. HOOVER'S NAZI CRITICS.**—It is hard to believe that in the face of the strongest criticism of his scheme for feeding enslaved Europe—which comes from the Nazis themselves—Mr. Hoover will not readjust his views, which are still based on experiences of the last war, of which the conditions bear little relation to the present. As usual, vanity and greed fight for mastery in the Nazi mentality. Mr. Hoover, in his unreasoning sentimentality, plans to send meat and fats to German-occupied countries in Europe. He has even dropped his original condition precedent—that the Nazis should first make good all the deficiencies of food looted from the countries concerned. Mr. Hoover's large and loose sentimentality now embraces the plan that Americans should make good the Nazi embezzlements, and encourage further successful crimes in that direction, with the obvious result of prolonging the war and the agonies of Europe. But the Nazis cannot accept the gift and this Godsent encouragement to crime without pandering to their own vanity. "Millions of Americans will be surprised to hear that the fat supply of Germany has actually improved. Europe's food supply has been solved once and for all." Such is the Nazi message to Hoover and America. If Mr. Hoover doesn't believe it, let us hope "millions of Americans," after getting over their first surprise, will let Mr. Hoover know where (believe it or not) he gets off his European food-omnibus. Let him employ his energies in feeding those who are in the front line of his own nation's last battle for survival.

**BUREAUCRACY.**—It is surely true that public critics of the Civil Service who combine the *servants* with the *system* in a general charge of incompetence will not win sympathy or approval for their criticism. No one doubts that, in the main, the Civil servants of Britain are a fine, skilled, industrious, dutiful and very patriotic and honourable legion, a carefully selected and very capable and trustworthy body. And few can deny that in the system of British bureaucracy joints in the harness gape wide and wider in wartime. The system may pass muster in peacetime; it *can* be tolerated then and may be necessary. In wartime, such a system is bound to grow intolerable, for it cannot adapt itself quickly enough to new conditions which demand initiative, speed and sympathy. To-day many thousands of men, overworked and war-strained, are conscious of the tightening and strangling grip of Bureaucracy, and are daily irritated by its delays and extravagance. Even so, most of those thousands respect the servants and condemn (while they make allowances for) the system. Moreover, every month of war that passes helps to confuse socialism with bureaucracy. It is not to be denied that war legislation tends towards the ideals of Socialism and indeed we do not expect it to be otherwise. The trouble is that existing Civil Service machinery is not capable of swift adaptation to an economical or understanding conduct of ever-increasing State control. With the result that, in inevitably lumping bureaucracy and Socialism together in our minds, we do less than justice to the merits of the one or of the other. Whether you live in a village or in a capital, whether you direct a big bank or repair rustic cottages, you are daily haunted by the huge and clogging shadow of the bogey of Bureaucracy. The City banker is most obsessed by the intolerable delays and apparently undiscriminating control over his initiative, which seems to put him in the category of a reckless and spendthrift schoolboy. In the village, jealousy, envy and discontent are fostered by the gross inequalities and waste which result from the swollen wages paid to village workmen attracted to Government jobs. The village builder, who has urgent work to perform, finds himself left alone, all his employees having swallowed the bait of high wages. There are seven pounds a week and overtime to be earned in the neighbouring seaport town under Government, with free transport and pay during transport hours thrown in. And none of this money is caught by the net of taxation. Giles, who goes, flaunts his guineas in the pub. on Saturday night. Garge, who stays put, continues to pinch on 50s. a week. Waste of paper, waste of time, waste of money, waste of the individual's golden initiative and natural gifts, these are the curses which Bureaucratic control in wartime always seems to bring; and in this war Socialism is inevitably and doubtless unfairly tarred with the same brush.

**MAP-READING.**—The old soldier of the last war is given to understand by many hints that his experience is not of much use in "modern" warfare. In Home Guard duties one is much in contact with the Regulars of our fine new armies, who constantly enter and as constantly move from our own areas. No unit, it is true, ever stays long enough to get to know us or our locality, but we find one thing common among all the junior officers and N.C.O.s who pass through. *They cannot read a map.* Now, we did at least learn that in France in 1914-18. In reading a map we did *not* rely on sign-posts. There are no sign-posts in England to-day and, lacking them, it seems, these young soldiers can get no value from their maps. The instances of their failure are, I fear, ludicrous and constant. They mistake the names of villages *miles* apart. Convoys go wrong and mistake east for west. I have met whole battalion transports jammed in cul-de-sacs and private drives, and young officers in despair reading their maps *upside down* and walking round them nervously as if they were unexploded bombs. There are many and contradictory pronouncements about the vital functions of the Home Guard. My experience tells me that to act as guides is about the most important. We should change our name again to *The Corps of Guides.* Meanwhile the Regular Army might usefully add to their intensive training syllabus—which has done wonders already—an urgent and very intensive course of map-reading for junior officers and N.C.O.s, and a primary course of road safety rules for Army vehicle drivers. Then we shall kill more Germans and fewer Britons. THE OLD STAGER

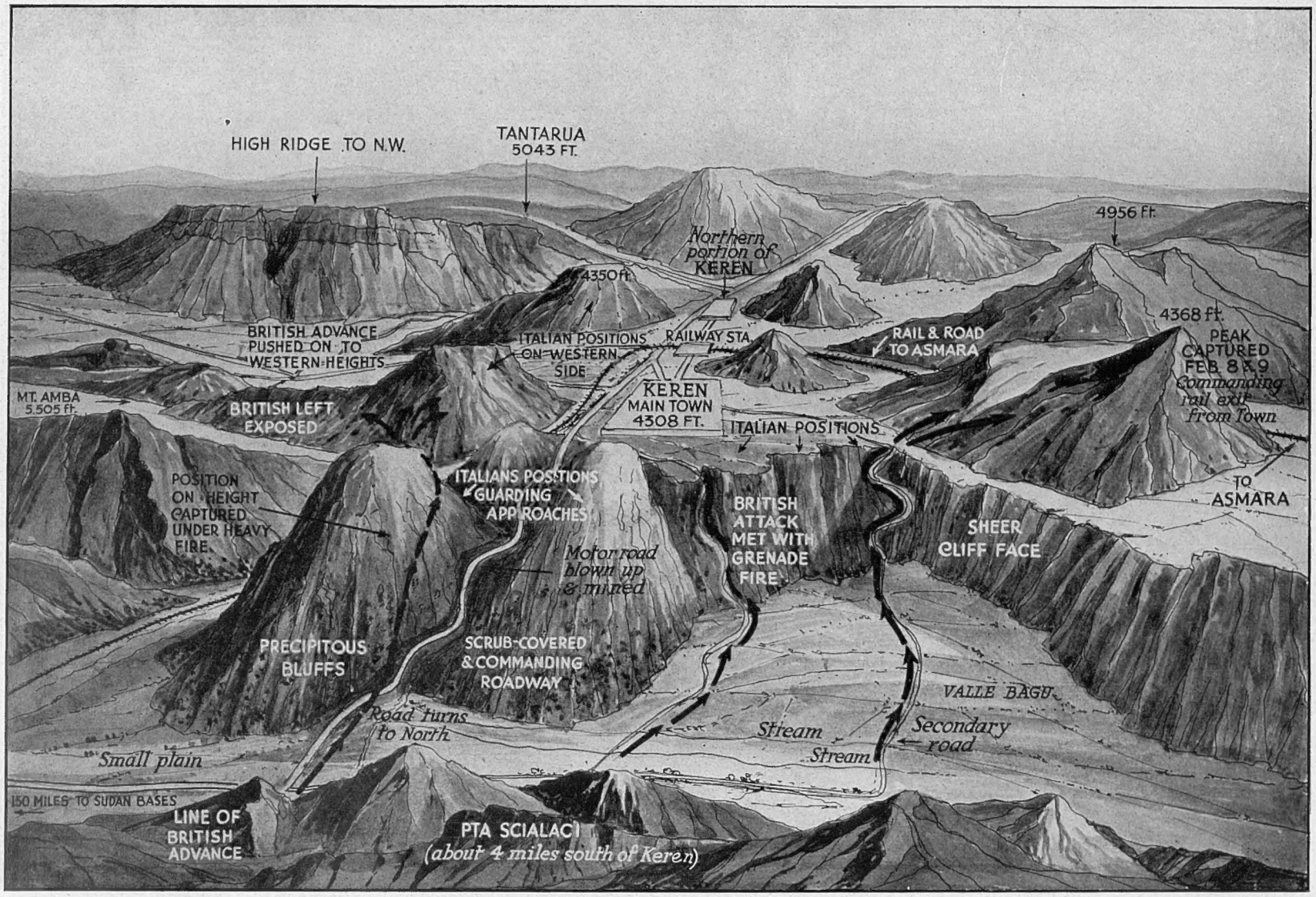
THE COMMANDER OF THE AUSTRALIAN FORCES, WHO LED THE FIRST BRITISH AND IMPERIAL FORCES INTO THE TOWN, OUTSIDE THE CIVIC BUILDING IN BENGHAZI

# THE AUSTRALIANS IN BENGHAZI

*The Taking Over of the Capital of Cyrenaica, February 7*

With the fall of Benghazi on February 7 the whole of the Province of Italian Cyrenaica passed under British control: the Military Governor is, as previously announced, Lieut.-General Sir Maitland Wilson, formerly C.-in-C. in Egypt. We have just received the official pictures published here and on pp. 262-63—of this issue, taken at the time of the British occupation. Benghazi is a beautiful city and a port of great importance: its inhabitants have welcomed the coming of the Australians. Even the Italian officials have not been resentful; but subsequent bombing attacks by German aircraft have wrought the damage which the Italian High Command apparently wished to avoid. Out of the 65,000 inhabitants about one-third are Italian

THE END OF ITALIAN RULE IN CYRENAICA: A GENERAL VIEW IN THE MAIN SQUARE AT BENGHAZI, IN FRONT OF THE CIVIC BUILDING, WHEN THE TOWN WAS HANDED OVER TO THE BRITISH MILITARY FORCE OF OCCUPATION




**PICTURED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN GRAPHIC FORM: THE ATTACKS OF THE BRITISH FORCES ON THE ITALIAN STRONGHOLD OF KEREN IN ERITREA—as seen from a point 4 miles south of the strongly-defended town**—*Drawing (from special material) by Percy Home*

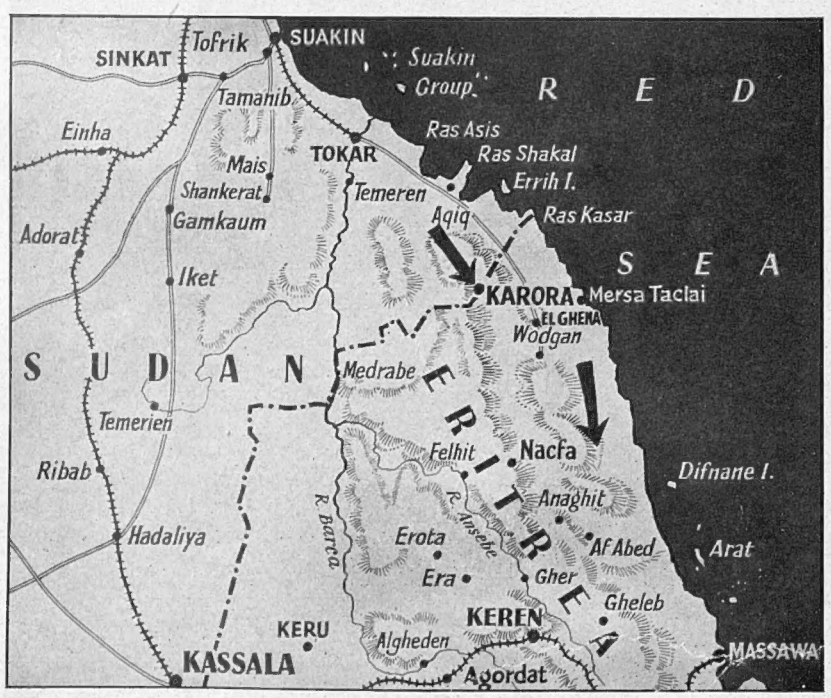
The spectator is presumed to be standing on the Punta Scialaci to the south of the Keren plateau. Beneath him is a small plain, the Valle Bogu, from which rise bastion-like rocks guarding the *autostrada* which climbs its way up to Keren. To the right is a kind of amphi-theatre guarded by a sheer cliff face. Up this run two secondary roads on which two attacks appear to have been made, one only of which was successful. The railway connection with Asmara has been endangered by this approach. The most intensive fighting has taken place on the hills shown on the left of the view, where the British Imperial advance up the heights guarding the road was made during the course of the month. The further advances on to a long-drawn-out western height are also indicated. These, when fully occupied, would command the railway station and the northern portion of Keren

# THE STRUGGLE FOR KEREN

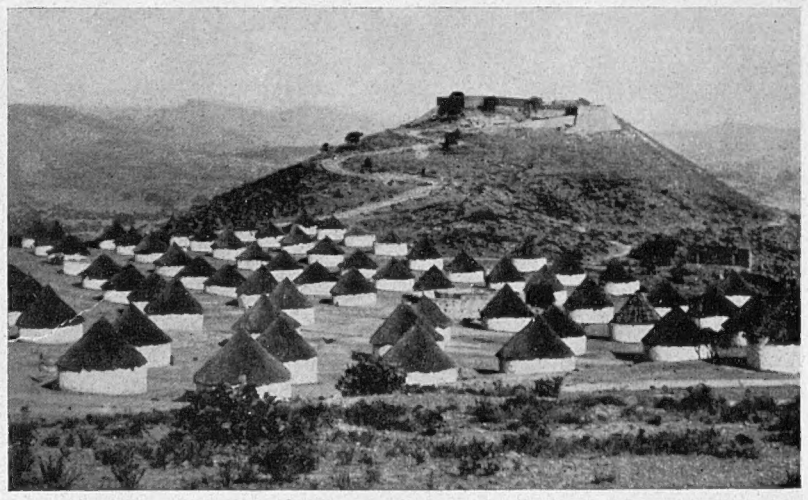
## *A Key Point which May Decide in One Stroke the Fate of the Whole of Eritrea*

AT the beginning of last month the forces of both sides began gradually to mass their men, artillery and mechanised units in and around Keren, an important Christian and Muslim centre which has grown in size of recent years owing to its popularity as a health resort. The British Imperial Forces had advanced along the Agordat road into a terrain of no little difficulty. The retreating Italians had fallen back to a position of very strong natural defences on the summit of a plateau situated some 5,000 ft. above sea-level. This plateau is surrounded by hills and escarpments of exceptional abruptness. Pushing eastward across Eritrea, the British Imperial Forces found themselves confronted by a knotty problem in the shape of two scrub-covered bluffs, mighty guardians of the shining *autostrada* which the Italians had completed some few years ago. It coiled its way up to the gleaming white town on the flatness of the plateau above. Here were assembled all the available Italian forces, native and European. The British forces found that the Italian roadway crossed a small plain and then snaked its way up between the valley or gorge between the two bastions. The finger-tips, as it were, of the mechanised arm felt their way up the roadway, but as this had been partially destroyed and liberally mined by the defenders attempts to storm Keren by this obvious method were deemed likely to prove too costly.

An attack, however, was successfully made up the very precipitous sides of the western bastion, and thence an attack was pressed on to two further positions overlooking Keren from the west. Here the long ridge of hill enabled the greater number of the Italian forces to enfilade the British left. All this while the column of troops advancing by way of the Red Sea coast was pressing down in the direction of Keren. The general situation at Keren seems to demonstrate that the natural defences provided by the precipitous cliffs and other obstacles enable the Italian force to put up a much better defence than when it was exposed to the rushing attacks of the Australians on the naked desert around Bardia.




**THE ATTACK FROM THE NORTH WHICH HAS BEEN BEARING DOWN ON KEREN:** While the Italian forces in Keren have been holding out on hills to the west and south-west, a British Imperial force has been penetrating Northern Eritrea and has been progressing southwards at a pace which made it appear likely that it would soon reach the northern side of the Keren defence area. If so, this closing of a large part of the Italian perimeter would doubtless bring about its capitulation. The northern attack has been by way of Karora and Mersa Taclai, a small Italian watering-place on the Red Sea. As Karora is on the edge of the plateau line and Mersa Taclai right down on the flat shore country, it would appear as if two columns were advancing parallel with one another. Nacfa, also on the plateau edge, was occupied a little later. The high ground drops away before Gher is reached; at this point the River Ansebe would have to be crossed



**A FORT-CROWNED HILL AT KEREN, TAKEN FROM INSIDE THE DEFENCE PERIMETER:** Keren, around which some stiff fighting has been taking place, occupies part of a comparatively small level area perched 5,000 ft. up among abrupt, scrub-covered hills. The summit of one is visible in the background, behind the lines of circular huts which house one of the native regiments

# THE PARACHUTE JUMPER:

*A Wonderful New Study from the United States which Shows the Technique of this Newest Form of Warfare*

**AT THE MOMENT OF LEAVING THE AIRCRAFT: THE CORD WHICH WILL ULTIMATELY PULL OPEN THE PARACHUTE PACK IS HERE CLEARLY SEEN**

For very obvious reasons no pictures of our own parachute troops can yet be released for publication. Speculation is nevertheless considerable in this country concerning this latest and most thrilling phase of modern warfare; elsewhere in this issue (on pp. 276-79) the whole subject is discussed and illustrated at length. Here we give a picture which has just reached *The Sphere* office from the United States, who have also adopted the idea of parachute troops. The soldier in the picture has just left the aircraft through the big man-size door in its tail; and within the aeroplane other soldiers are ready to jump. Attached to the parachute pack is a longish cord: this is the means whereby the pack is forcibly pulled open so that jumps may be made from as low an altitude as 300 ft. Without this aid the parachutist would need at least 1,500 to 2,000 ft., and in operations in which parachute troops would be employed this would be far too great a height. In the picture it will be noticed how near to the tree-tops the soldier actually is!

AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY MARCH INTO THE TOWN FOR THE HANDING OVER CEREMONY BY THE ITALIAN MAYOR. THE LOCAL INHABITANTS ARE APPARENTLY TAKING A KEEN INTEREST IN THE PROCEEDINGS

BRITISH SOLDIERS, FULLY ACCOUTRED AND WITH FIXED BAYONETS, LINE THE STREETS OF BENGHAZI AS THE AUSTRALIAN TRANSPORT LORRIES ENTER THE OCCUPIED TOWN IN THEIR WAKE

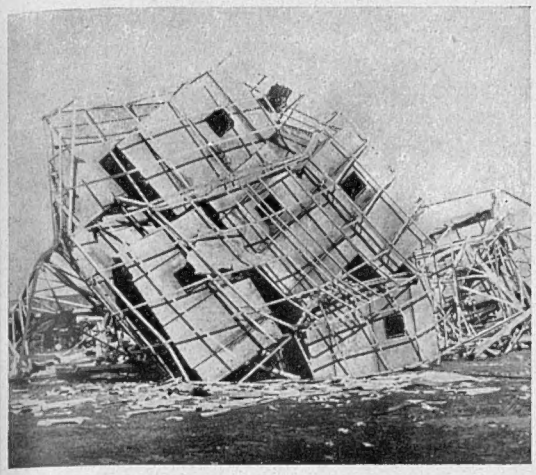
AN AUSTRALIAN GUN ENTERS THE MAIN SQUARE AT BENGHAZI AFTER THE OCCUPATION OF THE TOWN

THE ITALIAN POPULATION TURN OUT IN STRENGTH TO WITNESS THE ENTRY OF THE AUSTRALIANS. A NUMBER OF THE SPECTATORS ARE ACTUALLY APPLAUDING THEIR ARRIVAL. (Note the cold-weather attire of the Imperial Forces, necessitated by the cold "Rainy Season" in Libya)

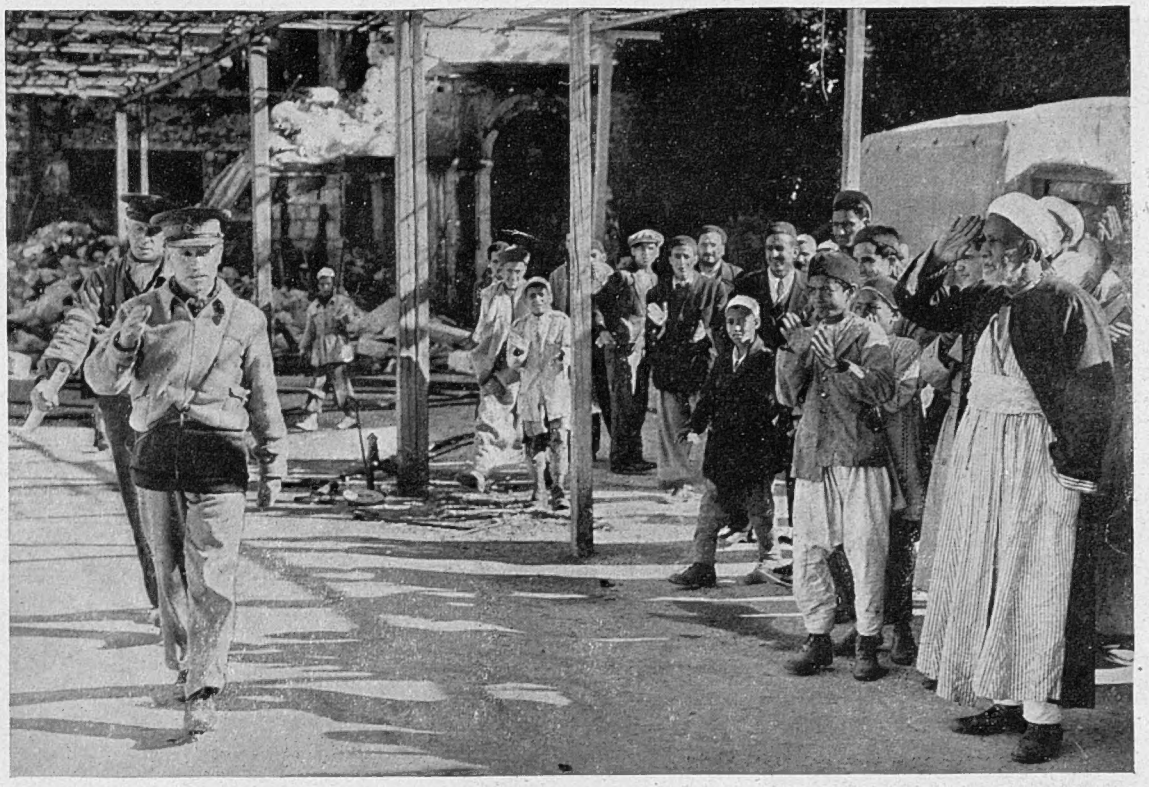
TYPES OF THE ITALIAN CITIZENRY OF BENGHAZI WH
Italian youth appear to be quite enthusiastic at th
their pleasure: the older citize

# The OCCUPATION of BENGHAZI, February 7

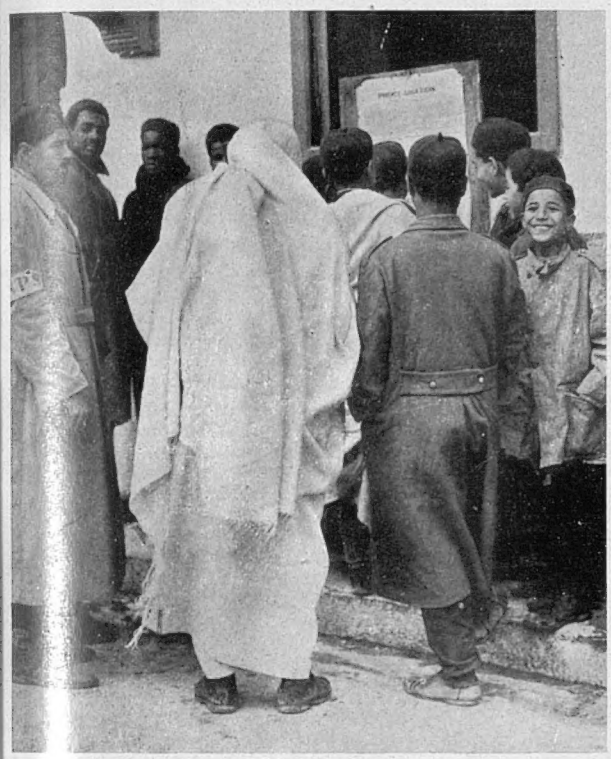
*The Entry of the Australians to Take Over the Town*



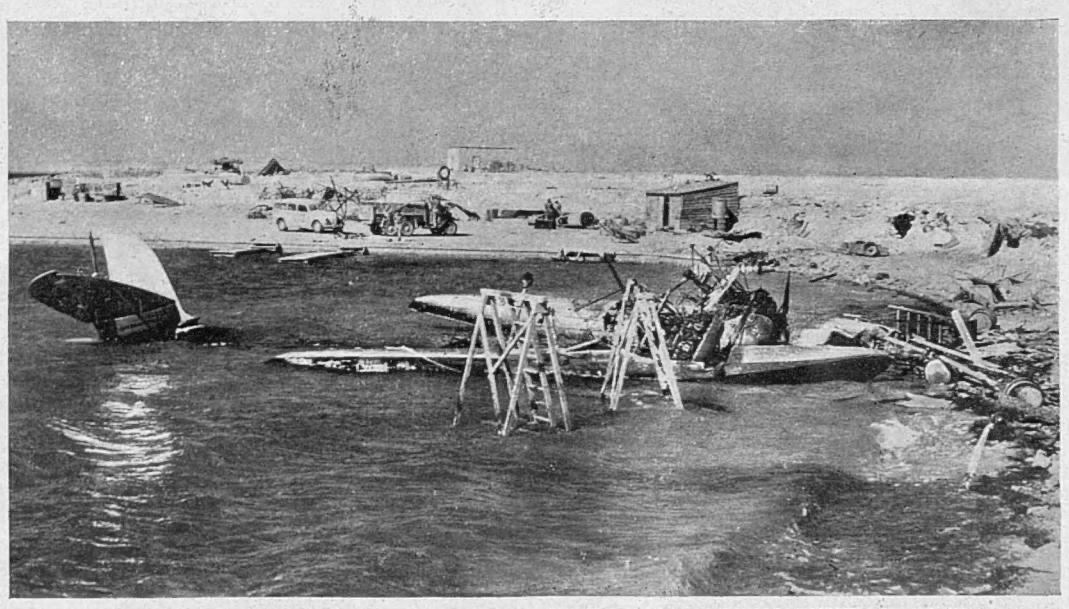
COLLAPSED LIKE A PACK OF CARDS UNDER THE ONSLAUGHT OF THE R.A.F.: THE REMAINS OF THE WATCH TOWER AT BENINA, NEAR BENGHAZI



GENERAL O'CONNOR, G.O.C. DESERT FORCE, RECEIVES THE APPLAUSE OF THE LOCAL INHABITANTS AT DERNA, WHEN HE ARRIVED FOR A TOUR OF INSPECTION AFTER ITS FALL

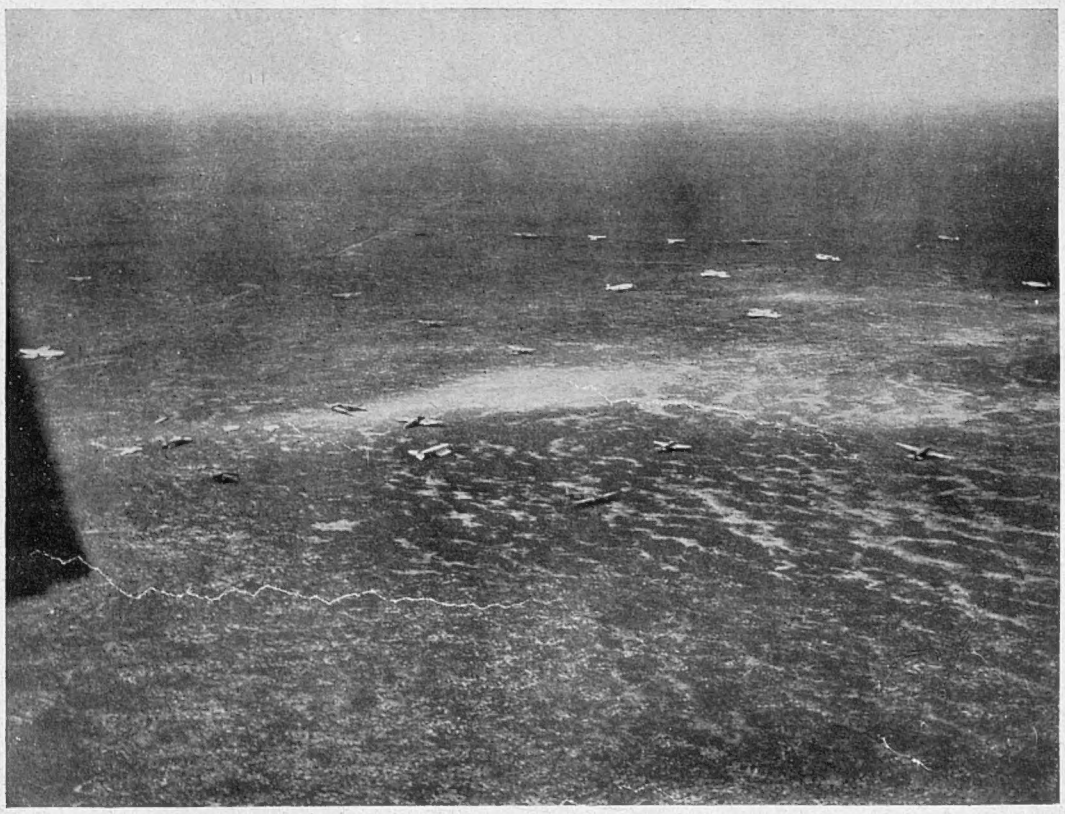


LIBYAN INHABITANTS READING THE PROCLAMATION POSTED UP BY THE BRITISH AFTER THE OCCUPATION

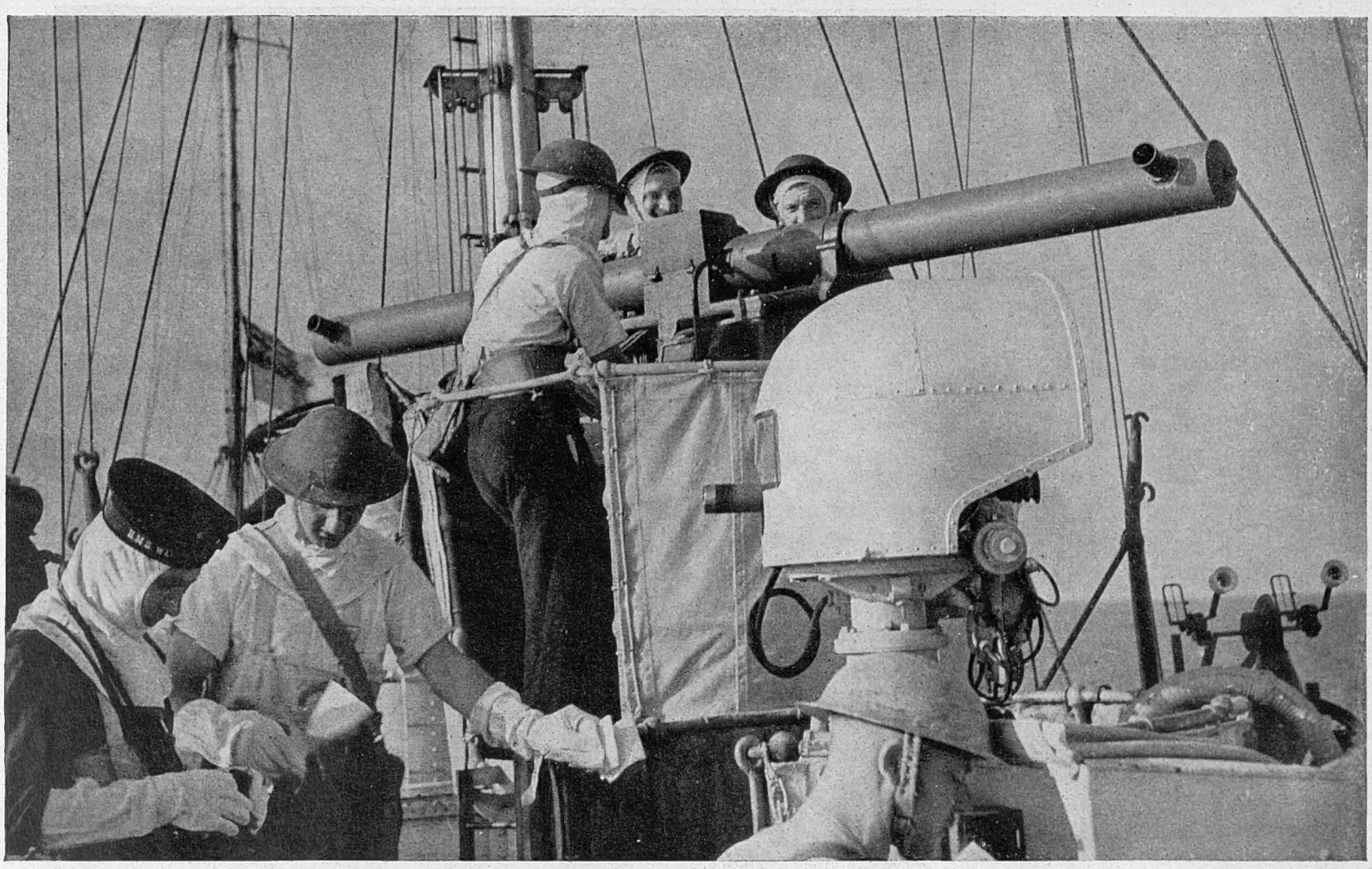


**BOMBA, THE ITALIAN SEAPLANE BASE, AFTER ITS OCCUPATION BY GENERAL WAVELL'S ARMY:** This was Mussolini's base on the North African coast; it was burnt out quite early in the campaign as a result of continuous R.A.F. bombing: the damaged aircraft in the foreground was only one of the many Italian seaplanes destroyed there

**WITNESSED THE ENTRY OF THE FORCE OF OCCUPATION. The passage of the Australians, and take little pains to conceal display somewhat more mixed emotions!**



**AFTER THE BATTLE WAS OVER—THE SCENE AT THE BENINA AIRFIELD:** Resembling flies caught on a fly-paper, these Italian aircraft were destroyed on the ground by the R.A.F., and were thus unable to help the land forces during the struggle: without a sufficient number of reconnaissance aircraft—to say nothing of fighters and bombers—the Italians were very severely handicapped throughout all stages of the campaign in the Western Desert

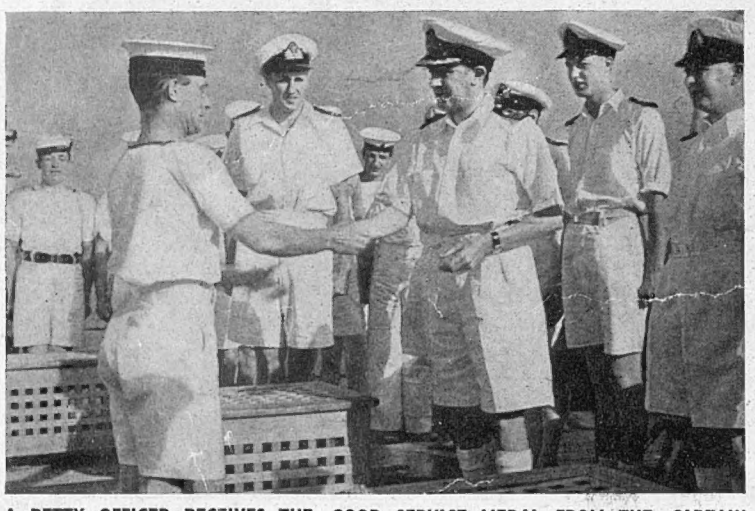


**THE RANGE-FINDER ON A "SLOOPER" OBTAINING THE "OPENING RANGE" OF THE ENEMY:** This is then transferred to the gun-sights, which are set to it, and the opening salvo fired

# "SLOOPERS" of the MEDITERRANEAN FLEET

Although there are various types of small ships in the Navy—known officially as Escort Vessels, Patrol Vessels and Convoy Escorts—and although the three types vary in design, tonnage and gun-power, all are generically known as "Sloopers." They are mostly of about 1,100 tons, rather lighter in fact than destroyers, and of quite a different appearance. Destroyers are of great length for their size, in order to give them their great speed of 40 knots. Sloops are shorter and have a speed of about 20 knots. Their gun-power is much less, and their guns are generally "dual-purpose"—that is to say, they are capable of being used against aircraft as well as against surface ships. Like the destroyers, they are fitted with submarine-detecting apparatus, as well as with depth-charges

**THE FIRST LIEUTENANT (ON RIGHT) HOLDS A SMALL-ARMS SHOOTING COMPETITION:** Many seamen are "first-class] marksmen," and all go "through the range" on land to fit them for amphibious operations. Many of the crew have shot at Bisley for the King's Cup



**A PETTY OFFICER RECEIVES THE GOOD SERVICE MEDAL FROM THE CAPTAIN OF THE SLOOP:** The G.S.M. is awarded for fifteen years' continuous "v.g." for character. Previous to this fifteen years, youthful indiscretions are forgotten. The Medal, which is much prized, is always given by the Captain in the presence of all officers and men. The ribbon worn by recipients is a wide dark-blue strip between two narrower stripes of white

**"TRUSTING IN GOD, BUT KEEPING THEIR POWDER DRY":** The sloops share with the destroyers a large part of the escort duties of the Convoys, here seen astern. Prayers are read every morning by the Captain on the quarter-deck of small British warships

**WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN A SOLID BLOC IN OPPOSITION TO HITLER IS NOW A BROKEN-UP MASS OF SMALL COUNTRIES POWERLESS TO WITHSTAND GERMAN THREATS OF FORCE :** Backed up by Turkey, it should have been possible for Bulgaria, Rumania and Yugoslavia to present a united front to any aggressor. Following the usual Nazi practice, however, one after another the States have been isolated—and, in the case of two of them, over-run. Even to-day, with all the recent examples plain for all to see, Balkan statesmen have not yet learnt that "union is strength." Apparently, the antagonisms of years cannot be allowed to die down, even when these continued antagonisms mean death to the disunited !

*SPECIAL "SPHERE" SECTION*

# GERMANY MOVES IN THE BALKANS

## *With Rumania Gone, Bulgaria Nearly Gone and Yugoslavia on Her Own, the Situation in the Balkans is Now Serious Under the German "Force-Threat"*

KING BORIS OF BULGARIA has had a difficult task ever since he ascended the throne, on the abdication of his father, King Ferdinand. His heritage was a country smarting under the loss of territory due to having backed the wrong side in the 1914-18 war. The neighbouring countries, Serbia and Greece, who had suffered greatly during the four years of war, had been rewarded with large accretions of land which Bulgaria claimed as hers by natural right. During the twenty-one years of uncertain peace King Boris has endeavoured to keep his people on terms of goodwill with their neighbours, and to promote prosperity in his somewhat backward country.

King Boris has seen the fate of Rumania, surrendering all independence to Germany, and yet has not been able to resist the infiltration of the same dangerous Nazi influence into his own land. He and his Government have been clinging to a one-sided "neutrality" (which has admitted Germans to all key posts), timidly hoping for the best, yielding to all German "requests" and at the same time giving forth brave speeches declaring determination to resist any attack upon their independence. Beset by threats, Bulgaria has been balancing one with the other—Hitler versus Stalin ; Turkey's power to attack or assist ; Britain's capability of winning the war.

Now the world is waiting to see what Bulgaria will do, or perhaps it should be, what is going to happen to Bulgaria.

Last **September** brought a happy interlude in the anxious period. Forced by internal weakness and pressure from Russia and Hungary, Rumania yielded up the Dobrudja district, at the mouth of the Danube, which she had seized when Bulgaria was defeated by Servia, after the first Balkan War. There was general rejoicing, three days' holiday was accorded, much flag-waving, and enthusiastic reunion with the Bulgars of the reclaimed territory. Speeches were made asserting that all difficulties with Rumania were now settled for ever, and effusive thanks were accorded to Germany for having "persuaded" Rumania to relinquish the territory peacefully.

**October** was used by the Germans for peaceful penetration, more affable "tourists," more instructors arriving at wireless stations. There was the opening of the German Institute, an excellent opportunity for the visit of the German Minister of Education with a large staff, and the making of speeches full of propaganda value. The Press has long been manipulated by Nazis, by the simple expedient of placing rich advertisements in papers amenable to Nazi policy, and removing them from such journals who ventured any criticism. Germany has a great hold over Bulgaria in so far as nearly the whole of the foreign trade is with the Reich.

**In November** the feeling of tension became more acute. A confident report from an American journalist in Berne went so far as to predict a bloodless coup—the Germans to be in Bulgaria in forty-eight hours. That period passed, but Germany was putting on more pressure for Bulgaria to join the Axis Pact, being anxious to draw her into action against Greece, who had surprised the Axis by refusing to submit tamely to Italy's aggressive demands. In spite of seeing what one small country was able to do, the Bulgarian Government is reported to have asked Russia for permission to join the Axis.

**December** was a month of marking time for Bulgaria. Greece was pushing back the Italians, and the British began the attack upon Sidi Barrani, the prelude to the series of astonishing victories over the Italian Libyan armies. Germany was not ready for any great move, but poured more and more troops into Rumania. More firmness was apparent in the Bulgarian Government, whose Foreign Minister, M. Popoff, referred cordially again to Yugoslavia and Turkey.

**THE KING WHO DOESN'T WANT TO BE EMBROILED :** King Boris of Bulgaria may have little choice when the Germans decide to march through his country, no matter how sincerely he may desire to keep out of the conflict. His Ministers alone are pro-Nazi : both he and his people have been looking to Russia for help—but that country will not (probably cannot) give this expected help. Hence Bulgaria's present plight. King Boris is here seen greeting ex-Russian officers who have found a home from Bolshevism in Bulgaria, on St. George's Day (St. George is the country's patron saint)

**TYPES OF THE MEN WHO NOW OFFICER THE BULGARIAN ARMY : CADETS AT THE WAR SCHOOL IN SOFIA PARADE BEFORE THEIR COMMANDER**

**January** brought more rumours of imminent invasion by Germany, but the weather rendered such action quite out of the question—the Danube was still frozen. The sad state of Rumania under Nazi domination alarmed the Bulgars, and the prowess of the Greeks aroused their admiration, while the visit of Colonel Donovan, President Roosevelt's Special Representative, brought news of the active intervention of the U.S.A. on the side of the democracies. The Prime Minister, M. Filoff, was actually moved to the bold statement, "We must be ready to defend Bulgarian interests and independence, since a people not ready to defend their liberty and independence with all means and in all circumstances are fit only for slavery." It was thought then that the Bulgars would, after all, not permit a free passage for the German troops through their land, but the Germans rapidly removed the impression of Colonel Donovan by sending more propagandists to Sofia, where there was a convenient German Technical Exhibition to open. Herr Hermann Esser, Secretary of the German Propaganda Ministry, and Herr von Pfarpocki, Head of the Cultural Department in the German Foreign Office, arrived with their mingled promises and threats—and meanwhile 200,000 German soldiers had gathered across the Danube. Bulgarian deputies presented a petition to the Government asking what steps had been taken to safeguard neutrality.

And now it is **February**—the pack ice in the Danube is beginning to break, pontoon bridges are ready on the Rumanian shores, and Hitler appears waiting to give orders to move in some date in March. The Nazis would like to provoke Turkey to some action against Bulgaria and then they could come in to "protect" the country. The Bulgarian Government finds no prospect pleasing. If they accept the Soviet offer of help (which they are said to have refused), they might enjoy merely the status of another Lithuania ; if they join the Axis, they see their independence gone, driven into subservience as Austria, Hungary and Rumania. Mr. Churchill's speech, urging the Balkan countries to unite in common defence against Nazi aggression and warning them that their fate will be that of Holland, Denmark and Belgium "if they allow themselves to be pulled to pieces one by one," made a great impression. Bulgaria was forced to realise that a day was fast approaching when she must make up her mind, and she could expect no benevolence from Britain if she aided the Nazis. Another deputation called on M. Filoff, bringing Mr. Churchill's speech with them, urging co-operation with Yugoslavia and the Soviet. But the Prime Minister could not shake off the Nazi pressure, the consciousness of the "invincible" Germans across the Danube, now reputed to be about 400,000, and refused any action. It seems certain now that there will be no united Balkan effort, so great is the mesmeric Nazi influence. Promises of a Big Bulgaria winning back Macedonia, and gaining an outlet on the Ægean, weigh against the proud dignity of sovereign independence. The Bulgarian forces do not face the Rumanian shores, but are massed along the frontiers of Yugoslavia and Turkey.

Germans already are occupying the airfields and all strategic points, under a civilian cover of technical instructors and so forth. The "tourists" have but to discard their winter-sport outfit, the doors will be opened, and Hitler will be able to achieve the peaceful occupation of Bulgaria. The lessons of the Past—and Present—appear to be forgotten by timid statesmen who talk of "suicide" to resist so great a Power ; the Greeks of ancient days faced the Persian hosts and the Greeks of to-day have flung themselves against a Power far mightier than themselves. Instinct to preserve independence at all costs is a better guide than cautious policy.

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**ONE OF THE NAVAL FACTORS IN A WAR IN THE BALKANS: A PORTION OF THE RUSSIAN FLEET OFF SEVASTOPOL: The battleship "Marat" (on left); the battle-cruiser "Krasni Kavkaz" (behind); and the destroyer "Petrovski" (on right)**

Many capital ships for the Russian Navy are "projected"; but for the most part the vessels now in service are old ships—"mutton dressed up as lamb." The *Marat*, for instance, of 23,000 tons displacement, was laid down in 1909 and completed in 1914: the vessels of this class were described by experts as "most unhealthy, insanitary and badly ventilated." The battle-cruiser *Krasni Kavkaz* began life in 1914 as the *Admiral Lazarev*: she has a displacement of 8,000 tons and a complement of 624, against the *Marat's* 1,125. This vessel is said to be fitted for minelaying. The destroyer *Petrovski* was laid down in 1917 but not completed till 1925—presumably on account of the Bolshevik Revolution which intervened

## THE RUSSIAN NAVY

*— Which Still Remains a Mystery to the Outside World*

OUTSIDE official circles, at least, the Russian Fleet is the great puzzle of the naval world. Secrecy has been a passion with the Russian Admiralty from the earliest days, and when the administration was so corrupt that it used to be said that the mistresses of the Grand Dukes wore the Naval Estimates, there was more than one reason for it. Whether there is more than one reason now is one of the questions upon which it is difficult to decide; but it is certain that the Soviet authorities have taken every possible precaution to prevent accurate information being published, and in this they have been greatly helped by the innumerable rumours which have been circulated, mostly starting from German and Italian sources.

According to the most reliable authorities, the Black Sea Fleet includes one pre-war battleship, the *Pariskaya-Kommuna*, whose passage from the Baltic in 1930 was an eye-opener to every naval Power into whose ports she crawled, and who has apparently been regarded as a useful figurehead with a public who do not understand ships, but past praying for as a man-of-war. She is backed by one small aircraft-carrier, two medium cruisers laid down before the late war and completed comparatively recently, and several destroyers which are mostly of the older type, although considerably modernised.

It is with regard to the number of submarines and motor-torpedo-boats in the Black Sea that there is most mystery. This is not only about the numbers actually possessed by Russia, although that is difficult enough to estimate, but about the number that have been sent down to the Black Sea. There are southern dockyards capable of building them, especially the little 250- and 500-ton "mass-production" boats of which the Soviets are so fond, and these little ships, previously lightened and prepared, could if necessary be towed through the inland waterways from the Baltic with the minimum of publicity.

It may be taken as certain that Moscow will rely almost, if not entirely, on small craft in the Black Sea. Battleships in those waters were never much more than a bluff, for they had no battleships to fight at sea, and few targets on land to bombard, and they have always been a danger to the ruling regime. The bored personnel which plotted revolution against the Czar in 1905 and 1917 has obviously been suspect by later rulers of Russia. Officers and men have changed, but conditions are much the same.

There is far less risk of disaffection and revolt in the small crew of a destroyer or submarine, but on the other hand, the fighting efficiency of a small vessel depends far more on a few officers. And it is in the officers that there lies the greatest weakness of the Russian Navy. The slaughter of 1917 not only broke the regular succession to the higher ranks, but also all tradition. The ordinary junior officer has learned that excessive keenness may bring him to the favourable notice of Moscow, but is far more likely to tread on somebody's toes and produce one of the dreaded secret reports. So the aim of most is to be inconspicuously efficient and no more, which is, of course, the wrong spirit for the destroyer or submarine commander.

**ONCE A MOSQUE, NOW A CHURCH OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH: The Church of Santa Sofia in Salonika exhibits the outward signs of its varied history. Over the quadilateral walls of the main structure rises a dome reminiscent of the building's period as a mosque, but the dome is now crowned with a cross marking its change to Christianity. The Church of Santa Sofia contains some rich mosaics**

**THE MASSIVE WALLS AND TOWERS WHICH STILL GUARD THESSALONICA: Standing as it has done within the perimeter of a notable cockpit of Europe, Salonika has had to guard itself with high walls and bastions against many a possible foe. The archæologically-minded visitor can pass a happy hour studying the various epochs which the walls reveal**

## THE PORT OF SALONIKA

SALONIKA—the old Thessalonica! Leading city of Macedonia and the second port of Greece. It is a city of white houses, minarets and towers, enclosed by walls, and built partly up the side of a hill, in the form of an amphitheatre.

The Saracens captured it in 904; Venice held it during the Middle Ages, and it passed to the Turks in 1430, remaining in their possession till 1912, when it capitulated to the Greeks. During the 1914–18 War a Franco-British force turned the city and surrounding country into a vast fortified camp.

Salonika was first founded in 315 B.C. by the Macedonian King Cassander, and named after his wife, Thessaloniki. Its growth followed quickly.

**ANOTHER NAVAL FACTOR IN BALKAN WARFARE: TURKISH WARSHIPS AT ISTANBUL: The Destroyer "Kocatepe" (on left) and the battle-cruiser "Yavuz" (in the foreground). The latter is the ex-German cruiser "Goeben" acquired by Turkey in 1914**

Turkey's only big vessel is the cruiser *Yavuz* which she acquired in 1914 from the German Navy where she was known as the *Goeben*. This is a vessel of 23,000 tons, carrying a complement of 1,300. During the 1914-18 War she was twice mined; but in 1927-30 she was refitted at Ismid. The destroyer *Kocatepe* is an Italian-built vessel of 1,250 tons. Before the last war, the standards in the Turkish Navy were not high, so far as officer-personnel went. But all that is very radically altered to-day; the commissioned ranks are of a very high standard indeed

## THE TURKISH NAVY

*—Which is Manned by Good Seamen, Well Trained and Also Well Officered*

As regards numbers of ships, the Turkish Navy is not in the first rank, but as regards its functions, should the war spread to the Balkan States and Black Sea, it is in an excellent position. It consists of one battle-cruiser, the *Yavuz*, which was originally the famous *Goeben*. She is past her first youth, having been built in 1911, but she has been thoroughly modernised and is infinitely more powerful than anything that could be brought against her. Two small cruisers are so old that they can be left out of consideration, although one was reconstructed about ten years ago. The four Italian-built destroyers are excellent vessels, and the way the Turks supervised their construction and insisted on the fulfilment of their contracts was a striking object-lesson of the difference of Turkey to-day and in the corrupt days of the Sultans. Also, if reports within the shipbuilding industry are true, it was a sad disappointment to the Italian shipbuilders.

It might be interposed here that the Rumanian Navy is very small: apart from a few destroyers, it consists mostly of river craft and monitors; the Bulgarian Navy is almost non-existent. So that Turkey and Russia, almost exclusively, share the Black Sea between them.

The Turkish submarine fleet is, unfortunately, heterogeneous in design, and two which would be very useful at the present time were not delivered by Germany on the ground that Turkish feeling was unsympathetic. They have, however, two of Dutch build to American design, two of Italian build and design, one of Spanish build to German design, and it is believed that two more of German design have been completed in Turkey since war broke out. A rather miscellaneous collection of gunboats, minelayers, minesweepers and other small craft completes the list.

Quite a number of other vessels, mostly of the smaller types, have been projected, although the reason that they have not been built is not the traditional one which has so often postponed Turkish programmes—that the money has not been forthcoming—but that the policy of the present Turkish regime is the one laid down by Kemel Ataturk: that there must be none of the old pretence about the fighting forces, and nothing which cannot pull its weight. A few minor vessels of the old Navy are retained for subsidiary purposes on the coast, but practically all the fleet is modern, well kept and well handled.

British officers who took training missions to Turkey in the old days were all agreed that the bluejackets were first-class material. The large proportion drawn from the coasting and fishing population were born seamen, accustomed to the handling of boats since childhood, and generally possessed a strong strain of Greek blood. The engineers' training was bad and the officers, with one or two very striking exceptions, were hopeless. All that is changed now. The bluejackets have all their old qualities, including loyalty and endurance, but have the great advantages of proper training and regular pay and rations. The standard in the engine-room is surprisingly high considering that the Turks are not a mechanically-minded race. And the greatest change of all is in the commissioned ranks, which, with very few exceptions, are now filled with excellent men, hard-working and well-trained, keen on their work and proud of their Service.

**A MODERN STREET IN SALONIKA: The capital of Macedonia and second largest city of Greece. It was captured from Turkey in the First Balkan War, and was an Allied base during the Great War**

The construction of the Egnatia Road leading from the Adriatic coast to Byzantium, through Thessaloniki, caused its further growth as a commercial and military centre, and also its intellectual and artistic development—actually it was during this phase of its history that St. Paul preached to the Thessalonians and founded one of the earliest churches of Christianity. As Athens is the capital of Classic Hellenism, Salonika is the capital of mediæval and Christian Hellenism. Her early Christian churches, by their number and originality, are second to none in beauty and dignity, and may quite well stand comparison with those of Ravenna in Italy.

Through tortuous, picturesque streets of old Salonika, the road leads out to the old Roman way, built by Constantine the Great in A.D. 300. The Church of the Twelve Apostles, like all Greek churches, is remarkable for its pictures: there are two vividly-coloured representations of the Holy Martyrs, and on either side of the door leading into the Sanctuary hang other ikons, framed in silver and gold. It was in this wonderful church that St. Paul preached hundreds of years ago, at the very birth of Christianity.

St. George's Church is 2,000 years old. It has been alternately Pagan, Christian, Moslem and then, finally, Christian again, but it has not been used since 1400. Inside St. George's were remains of old mosaics and stones with Arabic and Greek inscriptions; outside, in defiance, the Turks have built a mosque.

But the most important church is, of course, the Basilica of St. Demetrius. Its mosaics are most remarkable. They were partly burned in the great fire of 1917, during the Macedonian campaign, when Greece and Great Britain were also allies. There were sixty marble columns, surmounted by capitals of beautiful Byzantine workmanship. St. Demetrius is the patron saint of Thessaloniki. Actually, by a happy coincidence, Thessaloniki was liberated by the Greeks on St. Demetrius's Day, which has since become the second feast day of Greece.

**TWO VIEWS OF BRITAIN'S TROOP-CARRYING PLANE—THE BRISTOL BOMBAY**

Long before the Germans began the transport of troops by aeroplane, Britain had already used this type of aircraft as a means of Army transport in the Middle East. After the Vickers Vulcans, Victorias and Valentias came the Bristol Bombay, seen above. This twin-engined aeroplane can accommodate twenty-four fully-armed soldiers, in addition to a crew of three : or it can be used to transport heavy loads or ten stretcher cases. Its maximum speed is 192 m.p.h., with a cruising speed of 160 m.p.h. ; its range can be extended to 2,230 miles

# CARRYING TROOPS BY AIR

*For Invasion Purposes and for Rapid Transport from Point to Point*

TRANSPORT of troops by air is a new aspect of warfare of which we are likely to see much in the future. All the great Powers have had squadrons of troop-carrying aeroplanes for years, but only since the war began has the subject come to be regarded of major importance.

Undoubtedly Russia, Germany and Italy realised the possibilities of large-scale troop movements by air before any other country. Russia pioneered the parachute divisions which Germany adopted and used so successfully.

When the Germans began to build up their Air Force, they standardised on the Junkers Ju 52/3m. three-motor monoplane as a general-purpose bomber and transport. The Ju 52/3m. was well designed for this purpose. It is robust and easy to fly. It is a fine weight-carrier and can take off from and land on fields which any other aeroplane of the same size would find impossible from which to operate.

Great numbers of these Junkers three-motor transports have been built. Production was at the rate of more than half a dozen a day at one time. Each squadron of the *Luftwaffe* has its own transport aeroplanes, so that the ground crews and aerodrome equipment can be moved quickly.

Although the Ju 52/3m. is by far the most used of all transport aeroplanes in Germany, there are in all nine types of troop-carrier in service there. A significant fact is that all except three of them are built by the Junkers concern. The nine types and their general characteristics are as follows :—

| *Type.* | *Engines. h.p.* | *Troop Capacity.* | *Max. Speed. m.p.h.* | *Remarks.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blohm and Voss Bv. 142. | 4×880 | 30 | 248 | Germany's newest transport. |
| Focke-Wulf Condor | 4×720 | 30 | 233 | A long-range type. |
| Heinkel He 116 | 4×240 | 10 | 233 | Small four-motor type, not widely used. |
| Junkers G.38 | 4×800 | 40 | 134 | An elderly all-wing type of which only a few built. |
| Junkers Ju 34 | 1×660 | 8 | 164 | Light transport and communications. |
| Junkers Ju 52/3m. | 3×770 | 17 | 189 | The standard German transport. |
| Junkers Ju 52/3mW | 3×770 | 17 | 172 | Seaplane version of the Ju 52. |
| Junkers Ju 86 | 2×880 | 12 | 233 | Fast medium transport. |
| Junkers Ju 90 | 4×880 | 40 | 217 | A weight-carrier. |

Of these the Ju 52 and the Ju 90 are the only types from which parachutists are known to have been dropped.

All the German troop-carriers, unlike our own Bristol Bombay, are machines which could do little to defend themselves from attacks by fighters by day, even were they strongly escorted. Our Bristol Bombay, on the other hand—a type which is giving good service in the Middle East—has multi-gun turrets in the nose and tail.

Contrary to the general belief, parachutists are not dumped through the floor of troop carriers by the pulling of a lever by the pilot. Instead, the German parachute troops are carefully trained and rehearsed in "abandoning ship" in quick succession through the normal door. Fourteen soldiers can leave a Ju 52 in about a minute and a quarter.

German parachute troops jump armed only with automatics and sometimes sub-machine-guns. All the other equipment, such as the larger machine-guns, ammunition and the rest, are dropped separately in containers attached to smaller parachutes. The carriers alight to disembark bicycles, motor-cycles and the like.

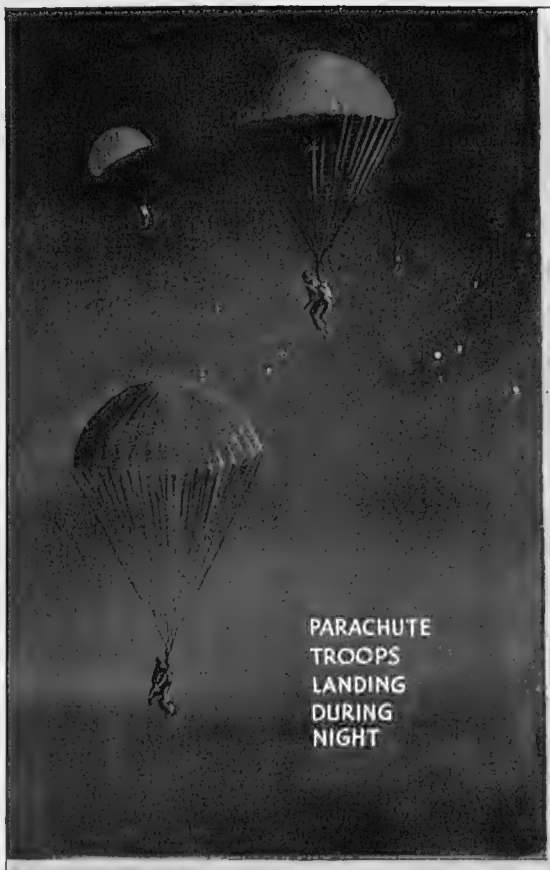
The Germans also make gliders. A Ju 52 could be adapted to tow at least two gliders, each holding some thirty-five troops or a light tank. This would increase the capacity of a single aeroplane by some 400 per cent.

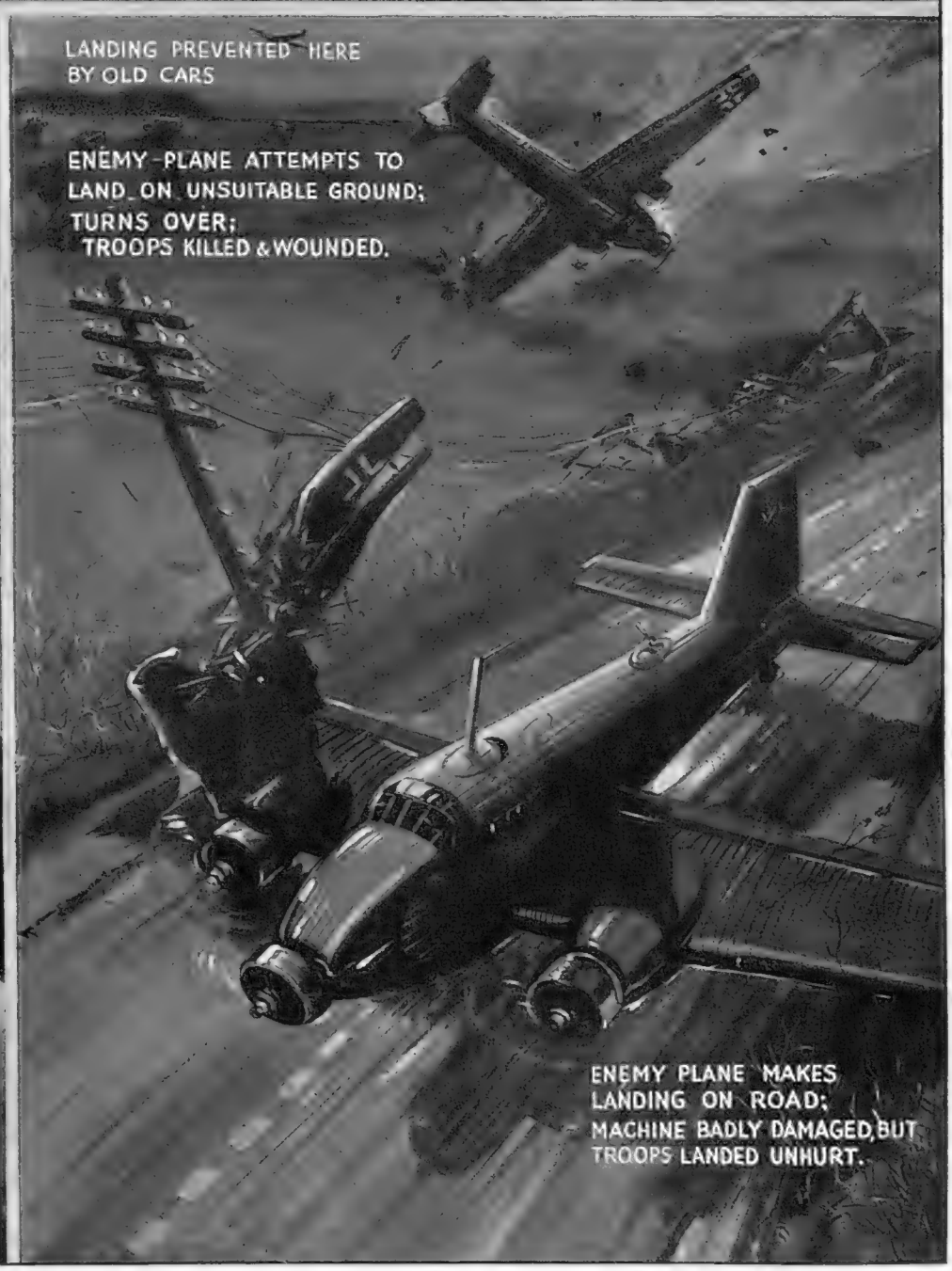
In the R.A.F., troop-carrying has been a regular means of Army transport in the Middle East for a number of years. First the ungainly Vickers Vulcans were used. These were replaced by Vickers Victorias and later by Vickers Valentias. Now the big Bristol Bombay high-wing monoplanes are in service.

Little was heard of British troop-carrying developments until the news came out that British parachutists had been dropped in Southern Italy. Bristol Bombays probably provided the means of transport. Future developments remain shrouded in secrecy, but the importance attached to the subject can be gauged from an order by the U.S. Army for 1,000 Douglas DC-3 transport aeroplanes for troop-carrying.

**AN AMERICAN RECRUIT FOR THE R.A.F. : THE CURTISS TOMAHAWK WHICH WOULD HELP OUR EXISTING FIGHTER AIRCRAFT TO DESTROY THE ENEMY'S TROOP-CARRIERS**

The Tomahawk I is one of six types of American-built aircraft now being delivered to this country. It is a single-seat, low-wing monoplane, built by the famous Curtiss-Wright Corporation. It has a 1,090 h.p. Allison liquid-cooled motor, and has a top speed of 330 m.p.h. Its armament consists of four machine-guns mounted in the wings, with two cannon-guns in the motor cowling in front of the pilot. This aircraft is in the same class as our own Spitfire and Hurricane, although its speed is not so great : but its greatest virtue is its manœuvrability. In the hands of expert pilots its slight deficiency in speed is made up by its responsiveness in control : experts who have witnessed its performance declare that it can actually be turned "inside" a Hurricane !






**PROBABLE INVASION TACTICS WHICH MAY BE FOLLOWED BY THE GERMANS IF THEY DECIDE TO LAND TROOPS IN THIS COUNTRY BY AIR**—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

We are hearing more and more each day about the possibility of an invasion of Britain by Germany: if invasion comes it will probably take the form of joint attempts by sea, land, and air. So far as the last-mentioned is concerned, if the Germans finally decide to make the gamble—and it certainly will be a gamble—they would probably begin the process by dropping some of their famous and much-publicised (over-publicised, many authorities think) troops during the night. The idea would be for these pioneers to clear possible landing-grounds of their obstructions so that troop-carrying planes could land as soon as the morning light was good enough for this hazardous undertaking to be attempted. Should these tactics be followed, it is considered that the German pioneers would be wearing British uniform and equipment. Consequently, if captured, these men could be shot as spies under International Law. Alternatively, a bold attempt may be made to capture a British aerodrome outright to land the troop-carriers on a properly-prepared surface instead of taking big chances with an improvised landing-field. In this case the German parachute troops would probably be wearing R.A.F. uniforms. The sentries would then be attacked and if the Germans were successful in their first attempts, not only would enemy planes be able to land successfully, but the defending aircraft around the aerodrome would also be immobilised. Whether a field or a proper aerodrome were used by the invaders, unless all obstructions were removed the incoming aircraft would obviously crash, and the men in the tightly-packed troop-carriers would be killed or seriously injured. Therefore it is not unlikely that some of the troop-carriers might attempt to land on wide, arterial roads: in this event, they would probably be damaged in the process—their wings would almost certainly be carried away by the telegraph poles, so big is the wing span of a modern troop-carrier; but the majority of the troops in the plane would probably emerge unscathed. But, throughout the whole of these operations, the heavily-laden and slow transport planes would be "cold meat" for any fighter aircraft who, we may be sure, would be gleefully waiting to pounce! If the latter were able to locate the main body of troop-carriers, invasion in that particular area would have to be postponed!

# The WORK of the CAPITAL SHIPS

*These Huge and Costly Vessels no longer Stay in Port, but Hammer at the Enemy in Many Parts of the World*

Notes by FRANK C. BOWEN

SOME time after the late war, during the great Submarine-versus-Battleship controversy, the late Sir Percy Scott repeatedly asked the question, "Of what use is the battleship?" and on each occasion answered himself in the words of a mythical midshipman friend of his, "No damned use at all."

In this war, events have turned out quite differently, and although the detailed story will have to wait until the end of the war, the Admiralty has released sufficient to show that the capital ships, battleships and battle-cruisers have been exceedingly active in every respect and, apparently, in every sea. Sometimes news of their activity is released at once; more often it has to wait for many months, when it cannot be of the least use to the enemy.

It is interesting to note that the question as to whether it is really worth our while to maintain a battle fleet in the Mediterranean has been raised at intervals for fifty years and more; recent events have left no doubt on that score. For several years after the late war the Italian Navy followed the policy of the *jeune école*, planning principally to fight against France in the comparatively narrow confines of the Western Mediterranean, and for that reason they devoted all their energy to the construction of small craft, from cruisers downwards. Then there was a change of policy when Italy left the League of Nations and she started to build up her battle fleet again. Being very short of steel and foreign currency, she began by reconstructing four old battleships and accelerating their speed by several knots; a doubtful policy from the technical point of view, but one which saved them a lot of steel and a good deal of shipbuilding labour. At the same time they laid down two 35,000-ton battleships, but the time that these two ships were under construction proved the difficulties which they had to face.

Without capital ships of our own to counter these six big Italians, the British position would have been very difficult indeed, and there is no doubt that it was the presence of our battle "fleet in being" which caused Italy to delay her entry into the war until we had greatly strengthened our positions at Gibraltar, Malta and Alexandria. As the Italians have always made a very great point of speed in their battleship design, the Mediterranean battle squadron consisted of the fast ships of the Queen Elizabeth type, while the slower ships of the Royal Sovereign and Nelson types were kept at home.

It is true that at Taranto and in subsequent actions the Italian battle fleet was very greatly reduced and it has shown very little disposition to meet our heavy squadrons. At the same time it would be most unwise to neglect it with our long lines of sea communication, and at the present time there is probably more need for capital ships in the Mediterranean than anywhere else. It used to be said that the French Fleet in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 failed because it was designed against an enemy which would accept battle at sea, while the Germans had promptly retired to their fortified ports behind extensive minefields and had left them nothing to hit. In fairness, allowance must be made for the very much greater range of modern guns, which has permitted our ships to undertake operations impossible with the soda-water-bottle guns of the '70's, but recent events in the Mediterranean have shown that battleships can do a lot even against an enemy which has no desire to fight a sea battle.

Most remarkable of all was the bombardment of Genoa. There can be no doubt that any number of people advised Admirals Cunningham and Somerville that such an operation was impossible. Similar advice was given to Vernon, Hawke, Cochrane and Nelson on a score of occasions, but on each they simply refused to believe the impossibility and carried out their plans. It is certain that the Italians also believed that an attack on Genoa, a place on whose defences they had spent so much thought and money, was impossible, and that probably had a good deal to do with its striking success. Air attack was to be expected, and they seem to have taken to their air-raid shelters at the first alarm, just as the Germans did at Zeebrugge. Fifteen-inch shells at a range which caused them to drop at a sharp angle, fired as quickly as was possible with perfectly trained gun-crews, were quite another matter, and were far more terrifying than the biggest of bombs.

Quite apart from the immense material damage done at a most important time, when Genoa was obviously collecting vast reinforcements for the stricken army in Africa, there is the moral effect, for it is obvious that the bombardment has shaken all Italian confidence in the safety of their own territory, and it is bound to make them fear for their long railway line within reach of naval guns on their Western Coast. This line is often described as Italy's main artery and it connects the majority of their important towns. The possibilities of bombardment must inevitably keep large forces, both naval and military, tied to the defences, and with so much to weaken their morale it was unfortunate for them that the work was carried out by ships which they had already "sunk" on more than one occasion.

On many naval occasions secrecy is necessary, but that is not to say the ships have been inactive. When the naval history of the war is written, the public will be able to see how well the big ships have justified their admittedly huge cost in peace-time. It must be remembered that a large part of the money spent was on experiments and improvements—the *Warspite* recently cost over £2,360,000 to modernise, and the *Renown* over £3,000,000—and this would appear to have brought a generous return. During the late war the Grand Fleet, which spent a great part of its time in port waiting for the Germans to come out to be hit, was constantly suffering from condenser and boiler troubles which would often greatly reduce its effective strength. During this war the big ships have steamed infinitely greater distances with astonishing freedom from machinery defects. As in the manner in which the ships bombarding Genoa secured their extraordinary accuracy in very difficult circumstances, that will be another story very well worth the telling when the time comes.

**A BRITISH CRUISER IN HER WARTIME CAMOUFLAGE:** Wonders have been wrought by naval artists in camouflaging ships at sea—fat ships become thin; long ships become short; tall ships become dwarfs; cruisers look like destroyers; and motor-boats like battleships—almost! Here is a fine example: at first sight, it looks as if the stern has been cut off flat, until one realises that it is merely a trick played on one's eyes by an expert artist. By such means it is often possible to baffle the enemy when an encounter at sea takes place. As a finishing touch in the scheme of camouflage, on nearly all vessels in the Navy to-day bow waves are realistically painted to conceal their real speed from the enemy: this does not help the efforts of the enemy's Fire Control officers in their complicated calculations!

**THE LONE SENTINEL: DAWN COMES UP, AS ONE OF THE HUGE QUEEN ELIZABETH CLASS BATTLESHIPS COMMANDS THE WIDE, LONELY SEAS**—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

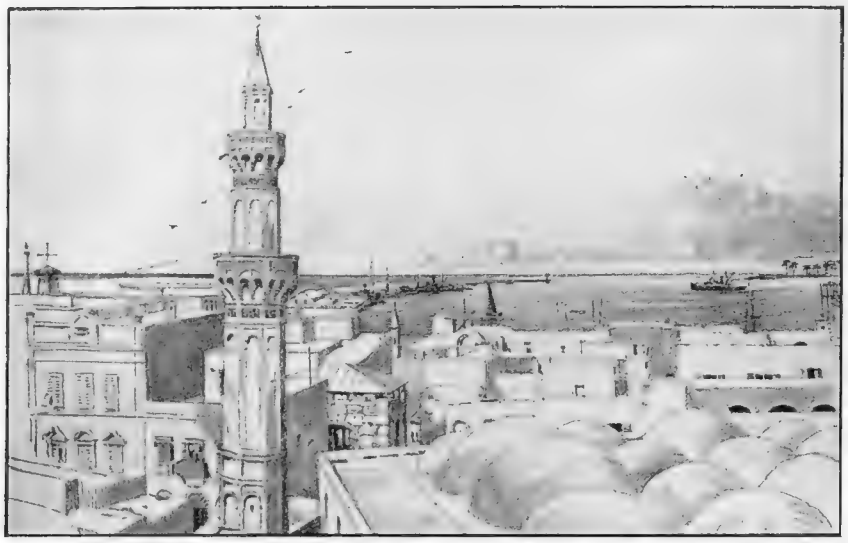
No longer do these mighty vessels stay safe in harbour while the cruisers, destroyers and small craft harry the enemy. In this war it has been the battleships which have done the serious fighting—at Narvik and in the Mediterranean especially; but also further afield their activities have been chronicled. The colossal Queen Elizabeth class battleship depicted by Mr. Dawson here is one of three vessels completed during the last war, and later reconstructed and modernised at great cost. Such giant craft carry a complement of well over 1,000

**THE RETURN OF A FAMOUS DESTROYER: H.M.S. "KELLY," FLOTILLA LEADER, AT SEA FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HER REFIT**

In May last year *Kelly* was leading a destroyer flotilla operating against a German mine-laying force off the enemy coast, when she was badly hit. Thereafter she was repeatedly attacked by bombing aircraft, but managed to reach harbour in tow. Pictures of her tragic condition were published in this journal in December last. Now she is back at work again, patrolling the seas—a living proof of what seamanship and determination can do. This official picture issued by the Admiralty is the first taken since her return to the active list

# The ITALIAN COLONY of LIBYA

*Now in Process of Disintegration Through the Rapid Advances of General Wavell's "Army of the Nile"*



**TRIPOLI, CAPITAL OF LIBYA: THE HARBOUR FROM THE BRITISH CONSULATE:** To the right of the Minaret is the Roman Triumphal Arch erected in honour of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Along the waterfront to the right of the minaret are the Customs Quay and adjoining warehouses and quays systematically bombed by the R.A.F.

*Drawings by Gordon Home*

**THE TURKISH CASTLE OF TRIPOLI, THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE ITALIAN ADMINISTRATION OF THE COLONY:** This was formerly the very strong fortress residence of the Bey of Tripoli. On the right is a portion of the walls of the town

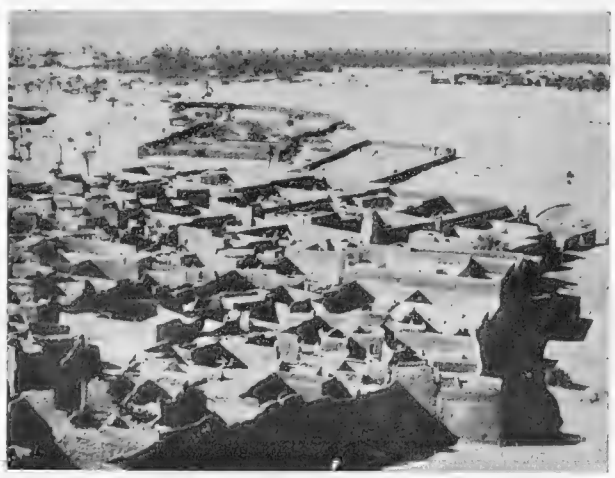
**TRIPOLI AS SEEN FROM THE HARBOUR:** The quays, landing stages and Customs wharf extend from the right of the drawing. The warm tones of cream under the blue sky of the North African coast are reflected in the rippling water of the harbour where red-sailed feluccas are moored

**MODERN TRIPOLITANIAN ARCHITECTURE:** The well-known "Gazelle" Hotel at Zliten, on the road between Tripoli and Benghazi

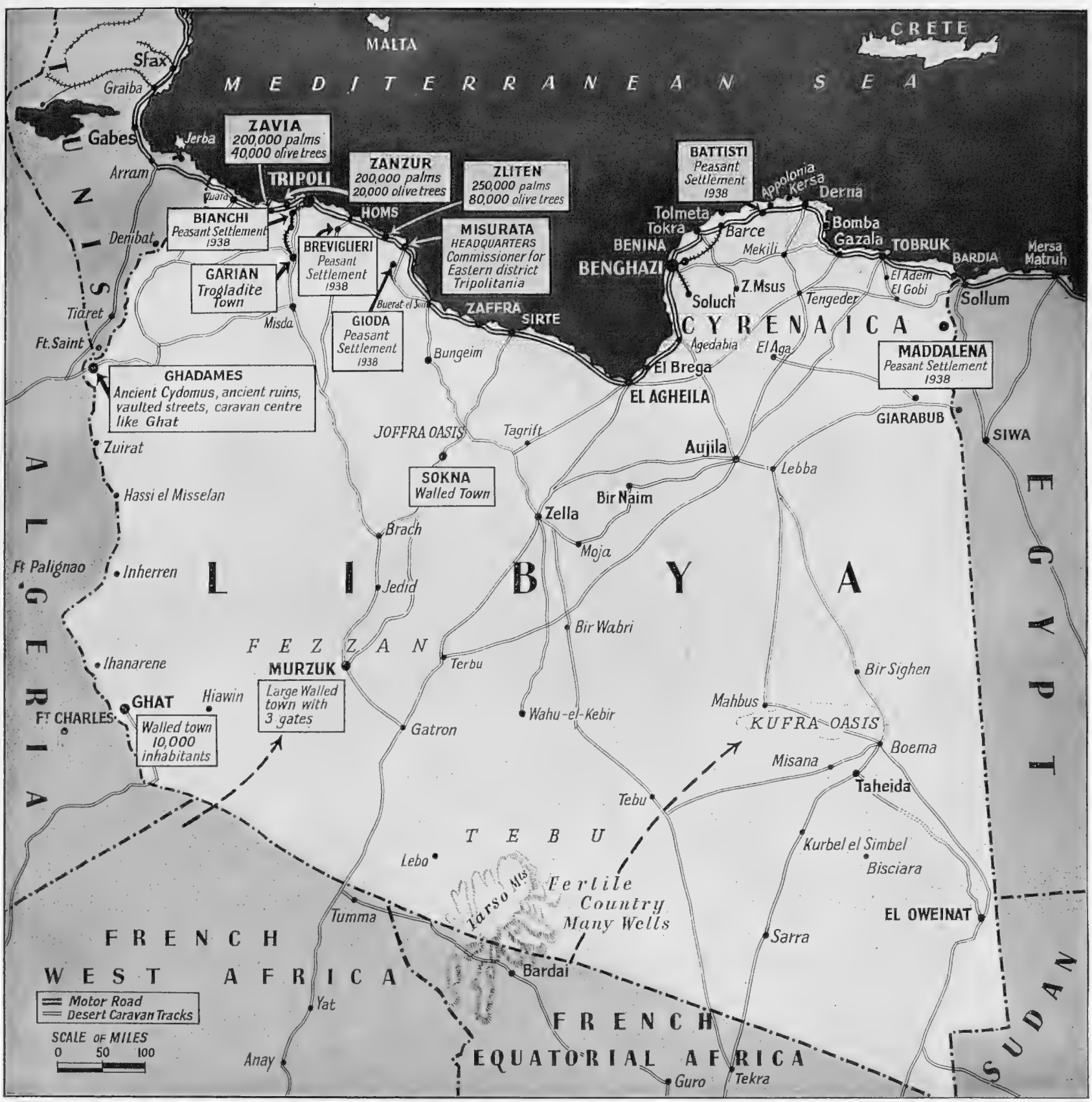
**WHERE GENERAL ITALO BALBO LIVED IN STATE IN TRIPOLI BEFORE HIS UNEXPLAINED DEATH IN AN AEROPLANE CRASH:** This huge building in the Tripolitanian capital, where Balbo lived in great style, exhibits a modified Muslim style in its architecture, like most of the new buildings in French and Italian North Africa. Britain's policy, on the other hand, has been to carry her own style of architecture to her colonies, adapting this style to local conditions

**HOW MURZUK WAS ATTACKED AND OCCUPIED BY FRENCH TROOPS FROM THE SOUTH:** Operating from Free French territory lying to the south, a Camel Corps column has recently worked its way into the heart of Italian territory—probably with the idea of linking up with the British and Imperial Forces which fought their way through to Benghazi and beyond. Various other strategic points in the desert south of Tripoli are also indicated in the map

**MISURATA ON THE COASTAL ROAD ALONG THE MEDITERRANEAN:** This town is the Headquarters of the Commissioner for the Eastern District of Tripolitania, and it is in consequence a place of considerable importance for the Italian colonists in this vast region



**GHAT IS A TOWN IN THE SOUTH-WEST OF LIBYA:** It is situated in the Italian Hoggar and was the ancient capital of the Senussi. It is a walled town with 10,000 inhabitants, and faces Fort Charles across the border in French Algeria




**THE ITALIAN COLONY OF LIBYA SHOWN IN ITS ENTIRETY : A BRITISH MILITARY GOVERNORSHIP OF THE PROVINCE OF CYRENAICA HAS NOW BEEN ESTABLISHED**

By the driving out of the Turks, Tripoli became Italian territory in November 1911, when the country was annexed. The following year, by the Treaty of Ouchy, Italy's sovereignty over Tripolitania and Cyrenaica was recognised by the Porte. Then came the vast task of "pacifying" Libya, which was also advanced as a reason for Italy's abstention from the support of the Central Powers when war broke out in 1914 : she was partly committed to aid Austria-Hungary, but very wisely refrained, ultimately ranging herself alongside Great Britain and France. The whole colony of Libya has an area of 406,000 square miles, with a population of well over half a million : it is divided into the two provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica : the latter has now been entirely conquered by Britain and is being administered by the recently-appointed Military Governor, General Sir Maitland Wilson, who was formerly Commander-in-Chief in Egypt. Much of Libya consists of desert lands, but along the coast is an area of great importance which has been well colonised by the Italians. The various points of importance in the colony are brought out in the above map

**THE IMPORTANT CARAVAN CENTRE OF GHADAMES ON THE TUNIS-ALGERIA-LIBYA BORDER :** This Tripolitanian town is notable for its curious architecture, its ancient ruins and its vaulted streets. Like Ghat it is a great caravan centre : it is stated that the natives spend much of their time on the roofs shouting to one another from house to house. A few days ago it was reported that Ghadames had been attacked by a Free French column under General de Larminat, but this was later denied

**ATTACKED BY THE FREE FRENCH FORCES ADVANCING FROM EQUATORIAL AFRICA :** A scene in the Market Place at Murzuk, an important oasis within the Ghat-Murzuk-Ghadames triangle. This has been attacked by Free French Forces, whose Camel Corps destroyed aerodrome hangars, workshops and many aeroplanes on the ground. Murzuk was one of Italy's bases in the Fezzan region

**THE MAN WHO TRAINED THE PARACHUTE TROOPS:** Squadron Leader (formerly Colonel) Louis Strange, well known as airman and soldier. He did not allow his men to undergo the ordeal of dropping from troop-carrying planes until he had done it himself "to see what it was like." Squadron Leader Strange is fifty years of age; he is the only pilot still actively flying who went to France with the old R.F.C. in August 1914. Recently he was awarded a bar to his D.F.C.

AIR COMMENTARY—By C. G. GREY (Founder of "The Aeroplane")

# PARACHUTE TROOPS and the CENTRAL LANDING SCHOOL

*New Facts Concerning Britain's Latest Arm, which Operates from the Air: The Training of the Men and the Tactics of Parachute Attacks. With Other Subjects of Air Interest*

**THE WELKIN-PIERCER.**—Some people in this country seem disposed to scoff at Germany's latest weapon, evidently not secret, the *Wolkenröntger*. I believe that Dr. Röntgen was the gentleman who invented, or discovered, what we call X-rays. Am I right? Anyhow, *Wolken* means clouds—the jolly old welkin which rings if you make enough noise at a party. And the *Wolkenröntgen* is an apparatus—presumably a "delicate apparatus," as is that mentioned by our Air Communiqué on night fighters—which enables German pilots to find their way through the thickest fog. It was invented by Dr. Ubbelohde, of the Berlin Technical High School, and is made by the Lorenz people, who make the highly effective German fog-landing apparatus—and *they* would not waste time on a fool idea.

According to *The Aeroplane's* description, the yellow, brown, red, or blue-nosed aeroplanes of the *Luftwaffe*, which somebody said belonged to Marshal Göring's personal squadron (I never heard that he had one) are the Cloud-piercers, and the coloured noses are part of the new device, but have nothing to do with infra-red rays, which, according to a German official spokesman, "resemble" the basic idea of the invention. All this was told to a United Press representative in Berlin, so believe it or not.

Furthermore, only a few experts understand the apparatus, and one of them has to go with each machine, to guide the pilot, who gets over his objective by ordinary crossed-beam flying, and then noses down into the clouds to see his target in the welkin-ray machine. Romantically the story-teller, or propagandist (same thing), said that very often the expert had given the pilot the position of anti-aircraft guns.

Apart from that, the whole thing seems workable. When I was a youngster the rays of Dr. Röntgen were a scientific marvel. Now you can go into any big boot-store and look down a tunnel and see your own disgusting toes wiggling inside a perimeter of hostile-looking rivets—that is unless you buy your shoes in Jermyn Street or Duke Street and have only hand-sewn footwear—and all for nothing, although the Medical and Surgical Trade Union would charge you guineas for a print of the same horrid picture.

**A Big Claim.**—Anyhow, the German official said that the invention would become the decisive factor in the Battle of London if the fogs enveloped the capital before the *Luftwaffe* had achieved its aim. To which the Editor of *The Aeroplane* adds: "The value of the device (if it exists) was proved by the failure to use it towards the end of January, when, for more than a week, the greater part of England was buried in and below a pall of fog, cloud, and mist. The *Luftwaffe* hesitated to push the green, blue, yellow, and brown noses of its all-seeing bombers through it, and the few raids made were of the usual haphazard kind with which Britain is all too familiar."

Now there I do not agree. And anyhow, sneering or jeering at a clever or strong enemy is apt to have a boomerang effect. It is as dangerous as is the jaunty optimism of politicians. We shall be wiser to assume that the welkin-ray *does* exist.

The "haphazard" raids may have been made to try it out on specific targets. That, I think, would have been foolish, and like our last-war errors, because if *one* such machine had been shot down or forced to land it would have given the thing away. I think that probably the haphazard raids were made merely to keep us awake.

A more likely explanation is that the apparatus is being tested in quantities on the Continent in all the varying climates and that it will not be used here till there is enough of it to fulfil the requirements of surprise and mass attack—which I have preached so often, as a humble disciple of von Clausewitz. That may explain the absence of serious raids at night for so many weeks.

That argument is *not* one which should cause alarm and despondency; it is facing facts so that we can get ready to face a danger. And perhaps we may be ready first, one never knows.

Do you know the story of the Army Vet. who told a trooper to give a pill (horse-ball in equine circles) to his horse? He was to put a metal tube into the horse's mouth like a bit, get it over his tongue, turn it round till the end of the tube was in the horse's throat, put the ball into the tube and then blow. Next day the Vet. was called to the hospital to see the trooper, very ill in bed. "What's the matter, me lad?" asked the Vet. Said the trooper weakly—"Bloomin' 'orse blew first."

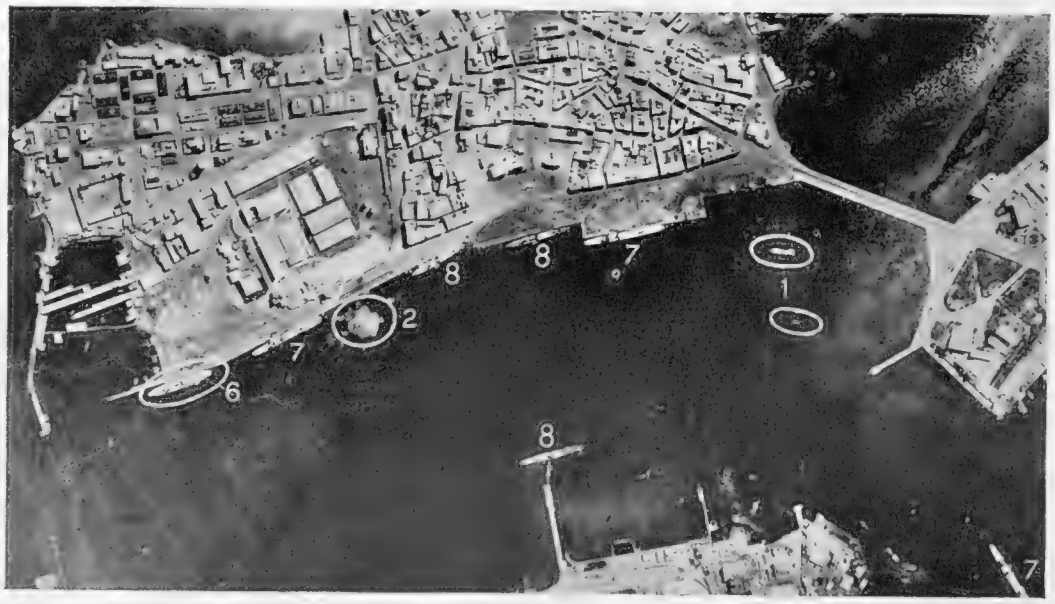
Which thing, as Kipling said, is an allegory. But in my youth we administered a horse-ball by holding it in one hand, pushing hand and all behind the horse's teeth, over his tongue, and down his throat, and shoving the ball down his gullet.

**Proh Peccatus!**—Open confession is good for the soul, so let me (if there be space) confess to three grievous errors, caused by my inborn hatred of verifying quotations:—

(A) A gentleman from Glasgow whose name is Lowland Scots, wrote: "Where's your Whitaker? If you had looked at it you would not have made such a howler as that on page so and so" (I have lost that quotation too), but he omitted to say what it was. There came also a gently reproachful letter from a gallant and learned graduate of Glasgow University, whose name is Pictish, so that he is entitled to look down on all Scots as *parvenus*. He

**A HATCHET MAN OF THE R.A.F. IN HIS FEARSOME ASBESTOS SUIT:** This is the uniform of a very gallant body of men—the fire-fighters of the R.A.F. Thick asbestos protects them in their work of extinguishing fires caused by crash landings; but great speed is necessary to prevent the fire catching the bomb-racks in such cases. Squads of men are now receiving specialised training in this work, and they will later be posted to air-fields throughout the country

**ALBANIA:** This picture was taken during a raid on Valona. Bombs can be seen bursting on the military settlement, and numerous craters give ample evidence of previous attention. A=bursting bombs; B=concentration of motor transport vehicles; C=trenches; D=hospital




**ERITREA:** This interesting picture was taken at Massawa, Italy's port in Eritrea on the Red Sea. It gives clear proof of the damage being done by the R.A.F. to Italy's Colonial Empire. 1=bombs falling towards the target; 2=a direct hit on a ship; 3=a direct hit on a shed on the quay; 4=a shed badly damaged; 5=a building completely damaged; 6=a sloop moored alongside a quay; 7=destroyers of the Leone class; 8=destroyers of the Sauro class

pointed out that Glasgow University was founded in A.D. 1411, and I had called it a modern university, in writing of new University Air Squadrons. I apologise. When I dared to lecture there some ten or fifteen years ago I evidently missed the 1411 part. What I saw seemed to be hardly free of the normal Contractors' Mess. There was nothing to suggest a state such, as Stephen Leacock described for the benefit of his former students at McGill (Canada), when he wrote that some of the students at Oxford actually have to live in rooms which have not been rebuilt since the time of Henry VIII.

(B) A Commander, R.N., writing quite properly to the Press on a matter which does not affect his Service, points out that I have mixed up the Horse Guards and the Life Guards. The orders read "Officers and Gentlemen of the Royal Horse Guards (Blue)" and "Officers and Troopers of the First (or Second) Life Guards." The Blues were, he thinks, raised in Charles the Second's time, and were recruited from the younger sons of the Landed Gentry.

Charles seems to have been fond of blue. Was not the uniform of Naval Officers chosen by Charles for his brother James, Duke of York, head of the Navy, when they met Charles's girl-friend, the Duchess of Portsmouth, on horse-back in the Park, and admired her riding-habit and its buttons and lace?

(C) I said that the populations of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark plus Holland and Belgium were together only a little more than the population of Hyderabad. Actually Hyderabad has about 14,430,000 people. Norway has 3,000,000, Sweden 6,500,000, and Denmark 3,700,000; Finland has 3,810,000. So one Indian State outnumbers all true Scandinavians.

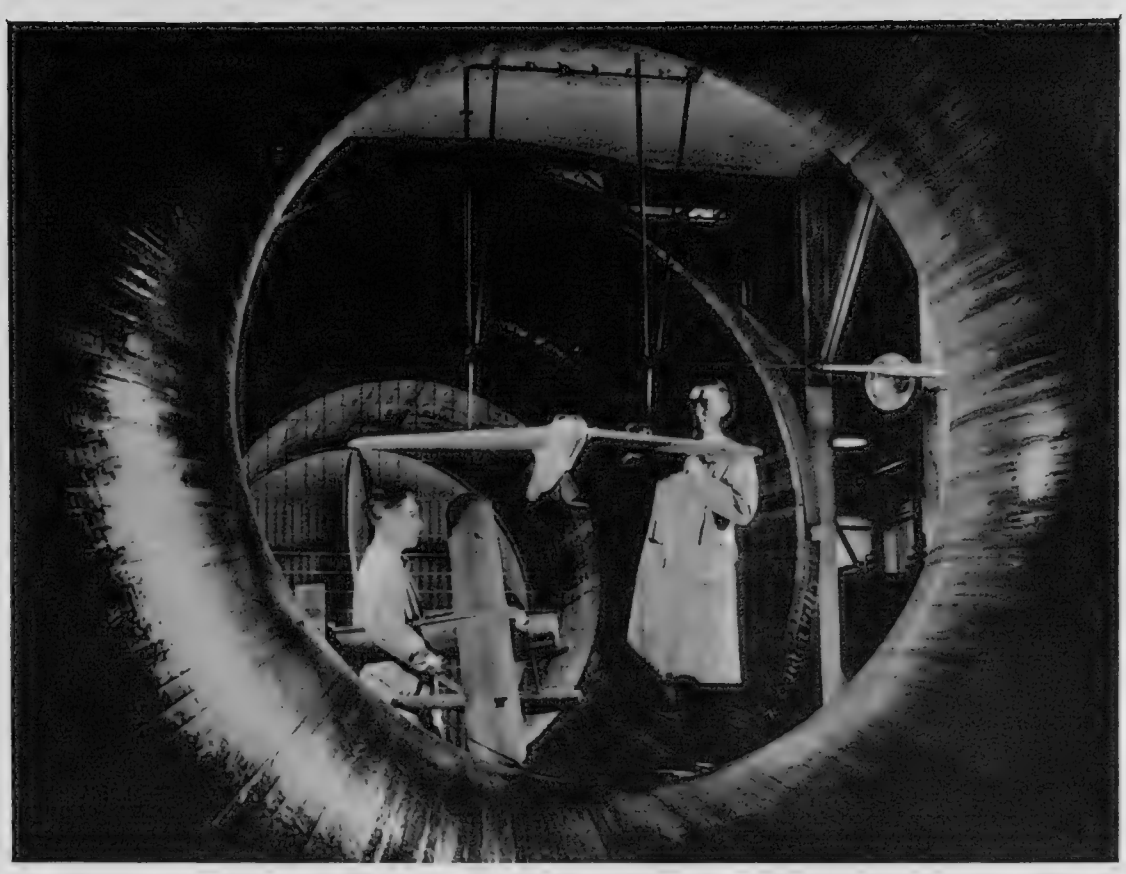
Holland has 8,640,000 and Belgium 8,250,000. But Mysore, Gwalior, Kashmir, Baroda, Indore, Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Patiala—to mention only the better-known Princes—have just on 24,000,000 between them, and the populations of the other Principalities run to many more millions. My point was that all these states are well pleased to be inside the British Empire, which guarantees them against external invasion and internal strife. So why not a United States of Europe, with England at the head? Somebody has to win this war, and the *Pax Britannica* in Europe might be a good thing.

**Tanks in the Air.**—Tanks seem much in the air at the moment. There are the usual stories of German giant aeroplanes carrying tanks between their wheels, like an eagle with a poor little lamb in its claws, to lob onto us here. The Russians did that too. They had a frightful six-motor aeroplane which they called the *Maxim Gorki*, because, I opined at the time, it represented the maximum of gawkiness, with its long skimpy fuselage and stalky undercarriage. They tied a tank under it for a short exhibition flight at a review, to impress foreign attachés. Later, *post hoc* or *propter hoc*, the thing came un-put in the air and killed about twenty people—including the Russian Air C.-in-C., General Baranoff, the best-dressed soldier in Europe, or anyhow in Asia.

Talking of tanks, a friend of mine in R.A.F. armoured cars in one of the deserts was asked by an Italian officer (years before the war) just across the frontier why we had no trouble with the natives on our side. My friend told him to watch. Then he drove slowly along and laid out a line of half a dozen petrol cans about 100 yards apart. After which he returned at full speed parallel with the line and 100 yards from it, and as he passed each can he gave it a burst from a machine-gun and blew it to bits. He remarked that a few simple exhibitions of that kind inspired a lot of respect, and friendliness.

**Being An Ally.**—Who would be an Ally if he could help it? Look at all those poor little Italian settlers around Benghazi who were so glad to see our troops and to feel that they were safe again from the native Libyans—apparently a very nasty mixture of Moor, Numidian and plain buck negro from the far interior. Hardly had they settled down again than along come their Allies the Germans and blast holes in Benghazi—according to their own accounts, though little has been said in our communiqués about this return bombing match.

Likewise, I do not suppose that Dunkirk, Boulogne, Calais, Le Havre and the rest look like prosperous residential towns in these days. But, of course, they are invasion ports and we can't help it. And I do wish that the Air Ministry's Public Relations Directorate would relate to the public what the stuff is that burns so fiercely every time we bomb those places. There cannot be any *hangars* on the *quais* after all that. Do the Germans dump stuff there for us to burn, or what? We ought to be told.



**A WIND-TUNNEL USED FOR EXPERIMENTAL WORK IN CONNECTION WITH AIRCRAFT**

Occupying a key position in Canada's wartime aviation industry is the Aeronautical Laboratory of the National Research Council at Ottawa. Here, for the benefit of aircraft manufacturers, fittings are examined and models used in the Air Training plan are constantly tested and studied. Scale models are placed in this wind-tunnel, where they are subjected to man-made winds with velocities up to 160 miles per hour, so that aircraft designers can make exhaustive research

**AN AIRCRAFT MODEL IS FINISHED, FOR USE IN THE WIND-TUNNEL:** Beautiful enough to delight the heart of a model aeroplane enthusiast is this sleek replica turned out for test purposes at the National Research Council in Ottawa. Built to exact scale, these models are carved from wood, cost more than £200 and require more than a month to complete. Among other things which will probably be learnt about this machine in the wind-tunnel will be its reaction when in flight to the big pontoons which have been fitted beneath the wings

## . . . AND NOW FOR PARACHUTERY

*On the following pages we deal with the question of Parachute Troops, and how they operate in war. Here are some notes by Mr. Grey on this British development of the War Against Italy.*

**Parachutery.**—Naturally the chief topic of air talk for the past ten days has been the landing of British parachute troops in Southern Italy. People can hardly believe that we can have trained, equipped, and used men in a method of war which was first used by our enemies only nine months ago. That any Departmental Mind could have thought, and above all, should have *acted*, so quickly, is almost incredible.

When you consider that the Germans started the war with carburettors on all their aero-engines, "same as us," and are now running entirely on direct injection of fuel—just as old Levavasseur did in the eight-cylinder Antoinette aero-engine of 1909 (only thirty-one years ago)—and that we still load and choke our engines with carburettors, you can see that there must be most unruly and impulsive, and impelling, forces behind the parachutists somewhere. People who get things done at such speeds might almost be a danger to the community.

Consider also the incredibly fast overloaded night bombers into which the Germans have transmogrified their single-seat fighters, Messerschmitts and Heinkels, all in the three months after the R.A.F. fighters showed them in September last that daylight attacks were not healthy for them. And consider that although Stieger of Blackburns put up a scheme for a 400-m.p.h. slip-wing fighter three *years* ago, and that Pemberton Billing revived the idea fifteen months ago, without knowing of Stieger, we still have no "overload" bomber—as we might call them.

Here I may say that some of the most experienced and practical men in the R.A.F. are in favour of the idea, but that it has been blocked at every turn by technical people—some of whom I know from long experience to be plain asses, and some a public menace because of long series of technical mistakes or blockages of progress for which they have been responsible.

The fact that every practical man in every Service, Navy, Army *and* Air Force, can tell of similar stupidities, and the fact that the same thing has hitherto been true in Germany, France, Italy, and America, is no consolation when apparently something has happened in Germany which has swept away such official obstructionists. I can only hope that the speed with which we have trained and used our parachute troops is evidence of a like change of

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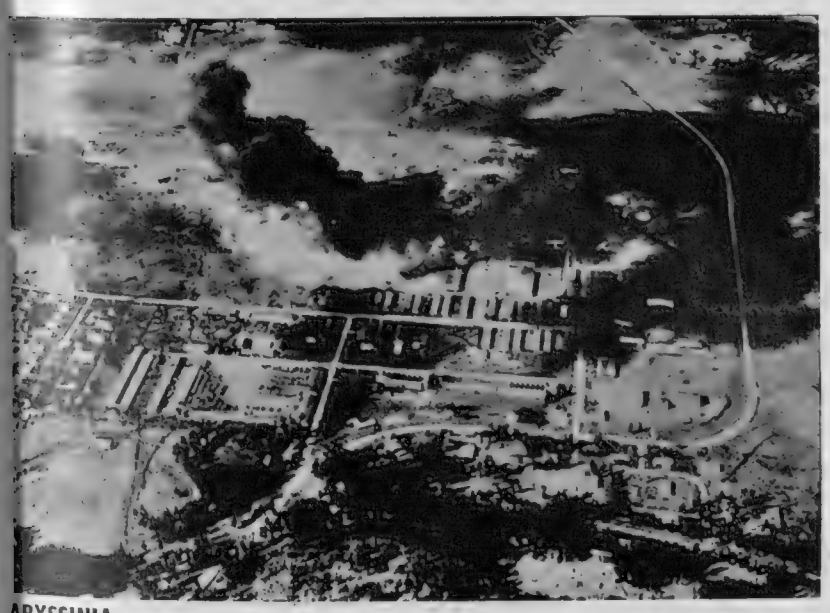
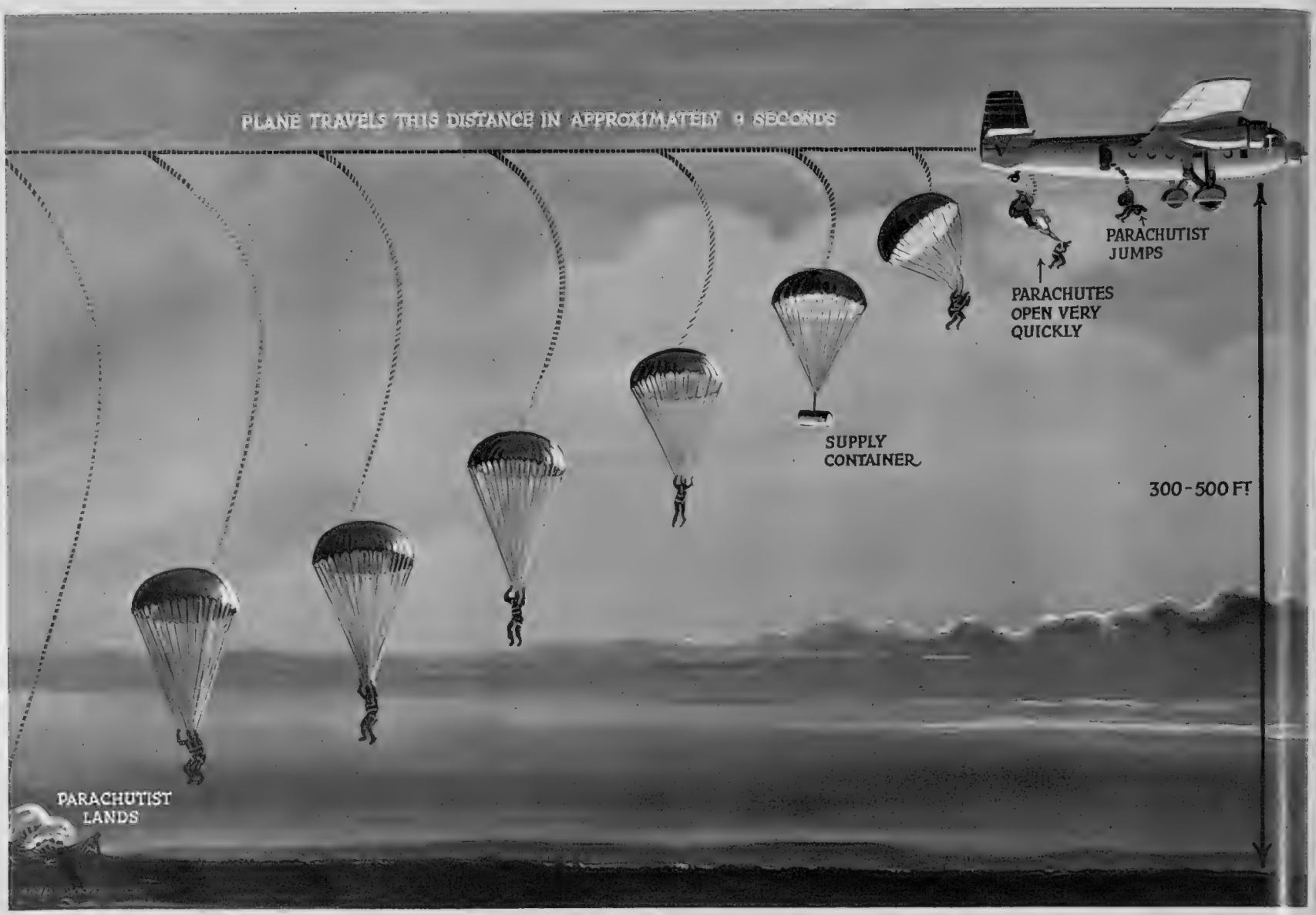


**ABYSSINIA:** Addis Ababa aerodrome after its attack. A direct hit has been scored on the hangars which can be seen to be well alight and burning fiercely. This aerodrome has come in for a good deal of attention from the R.A.F.: it is only by air that Italy can maintain even a semblance of communication with Abyssinia




**THE PROCESS OF PARACHUTING : SHOWING HOW A NUMBER OF PARACHUTE TROOPS CAN BE DROPPED CLOSE TOGETHER IN A MINIMUM OF TIME :** It is essential that the concentration of parachute troops should be as compact as possible so that a bold front can be presented to the enemy. In the view shown above, the men have been dropped from as low as 300-500 ft. and in the space of nine seconds. As the men fall, supply containers also fall with them, so that their essential equipment is ready for use at once

# PARACHUTERY *(Cont. from preceding page)*

Article by C. G. GREY. Drawings by ROLAND DAVIES

spirit in this country. Anyhow, there were our parachutists, paratroops, or whatever you like to call them, in Italy round about St. Valentine's Day—a pretty picture from the sky for Il Duce, and a credit to the Central Landing School, or the Central Landing Establishment, whichever it likes to call itself.

I prefer the C.L.S. as a title. It recalls the Central Flying School at Upavon on Salisbury Plain of 1912 where the pioneers of Navy and Army Aviation were taught to fly. Now the C.L.S. teaches people who are sent up into the air how to land—which, after all, is the consummation of an air voyage—not to mention sometimes putting the lander into the *consommé*.

Central Landing *Establishment* sounds too formal and full of routine for anything as haphazard as coming down in a heap with a parachute. It recalls the R.A.F. Aeroplane and Armament Experimental Establishment, late of Martlesham Heath, whose excellent work made Martlesham performance figures the equivalent of testimony on oath to an aeroplane's performance, and the Marine Aircraft Experimental Establishment, late of Felixstowe, which was its opposite number on the seaplane side. Also it recalls that name of ill-omen, the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough, which cost us £400,000 a year for ten or fifteen years before the war, and never produced anything worth having. Worse than that, it has continually blocked progress by holding up new ideas on the pretext that it had something better of its own just coming along. A disastrous Establishment. And, another thing, the R.A.E. was chiefly responsible for the fact that our aviators did *not* have parachutes in 1917-18, when the Germans already had their *fallschirmen*, and saved lives with them, while our men were, in effect, dead every time an aeroplane caught fire in the air.

**What Were the Objectives ?**—Probably, in long-overdue course, we shall be told some facts about the Calabrian raid. Obviously it was run by the Air Force, because the Fleet Air Arm has no troop-carriers, nor any types big enough to carry troops in numbers. The Navy's part in this show would be picking the survivors off pre-arranged spots on the coast. But, at the time of writing, we do not know whether the troops were Regular Army, desperadoes of the R.A.F., or what. Each of the three Services does bits of the jobs of the other two, so one

*On right*—
**HOW THE PARACHUTE TROOPS ACTUALLY LEAVE THE TROOP-CARRIER, WITH QUICK-OPENING PARACHUTES :** By dropping from a low height, parachutists escape detection to a certain extent ; they are also less likely to be "shot up" by opposing aircraft during their descent. This picture shows the usual type of parachute employed for the purpose : it differs considerably from that worn by pilots of fighter or bomber aircraft—in particular, each chute has a cord attached to the aircraft ; as the man jumps, this cord opens the pack almost instantaneously

never knows. The Army and the R.A.F. have armed and armoured speed-boats. The Navy and the Army have their own types of aeroplanes. And everybody knows that when sailormen supply landing-parties they march the soldiers off their feet, and that R.A.F. drill, at the Depôt anyhow, is smarter than anything in the Army, except that of the Brigade of Guards. It is all rather confusing.

The Italian official statement made so much of the parachutists' objective being the great aqueduct which supplies 3,000,000 people that the real objective must have been something else—and anyhow, why should we worry about their water? Those 3,000,000 people got water before the aqueduct was built. So fairly obviously the objectives must have had some military value, and were presumably the two railroads which bring men and material to the coast for short-sea transport to the German Air Force at Catania in Sicily. There cannot be anything else in Calabria that matters.

**Why Give It Away?**—A question which arises is, whether those objectives were so important as to justify the exposure of our parachute organisation. Might we not have been wiser to keep it more or less under cover till we could get the full benefit of surprise and mass attack on something big and worth while? In the first Anglo-German War (1914-18) we made a habit of presenting all our best new things to the enemy as soon as they were ready for use. On the first day they went into action we gave the Germans half a squadron of Bristol Fighters and a whole squadron (bar one survivor) of D.H.9s. That was Eastertide 1917. We gave them the first F.E.2d. and the first Handley Page twin-motor bomber. We sent a dozen or two tanks into action on the Somme in July 1916, and gave the game away without getting anything for it.

Apart from the fact that the tanks ought to have been in action in July or August 1915—seeing that I had the inventor and his original sketches in my office in September-October 1914—if we could not make them in quantities till 1916, because of stupidity, conservatism, jealousy and intrigue, then we might have had the sense to wait till we had a thousand or two, so that we could have smashed the Hindenburg Line properly.

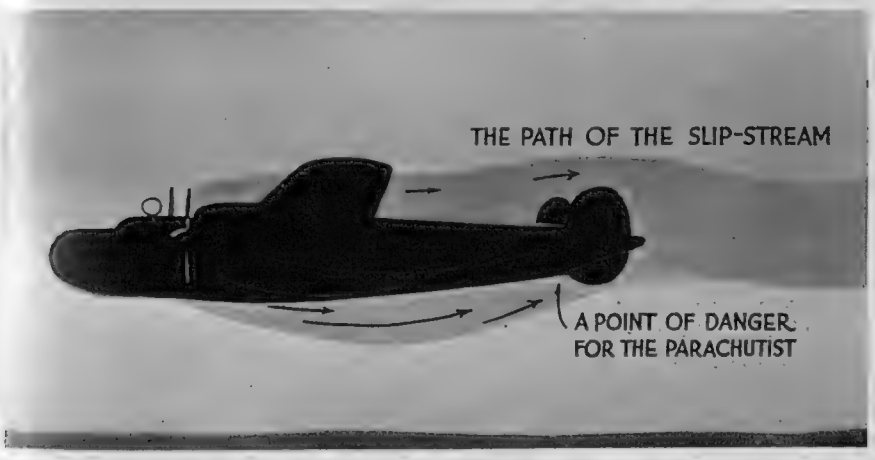
The tanks were only once used as they should have been used—that was in Lord Cavan's attack in the direction of Cambrai and the Canal du Nord in November 1917. For the rest of the war they were wasted. And the Germans, who scoffed at our feeble attempts in 1916-18 profited in 1940 by all the efforts of General Fuller and other "mechanicians" to persuade our bone-heads in high places to develop land-ships as Robert McFie foresaw them in 1914. So let us apply the lessons to be learned from that disastrous history to our handling of the Air Force and the parachute troops.

By the way, *will* the average journalist ever learn English or any other language? *Para* implies action against—hence the word parry, which is an action against a blow. *Parachute* (French) means guarding against a *chute* or fall. The Germans call it a *Fallschirm*, or fall-shield. So paratroops would mean something to be used against troops, such as barbed wire or tanks, and a parashot would be something to be used against shot, such as an armoured shield.

**Who Shoots Whom?**—Connected with this is the question whether parachutists should be shot on sight, as some warlike Home Guards seem to think, or not. If a parachutist has baled out of a damaged aeroplane, then he should certainly not be shot. He is worth a lot alive to our Air Intelligence Service. If he is a trooper dropped from a troop-carrier by parachute, then presumably he is intent on evil and may be shot on landing—do not try to shoot at him in the air, you can't judge his height or speed. Wait till he stops. But also remember that if he holds up his hands he is entitled to the same treatment as is any other soldier. If you (whether Regular, Home Guard, or whatnot) make a habit of shooting men with their hands up—well, shoot, that's your affair and his. There is a lot more to be said about parachutists, but that is enough for to-day, except that I wish that we could find a good word for parachute troops. Can anyone help?

I suppose that the Germans would call them *Falltruppen*. I have not seen the official name. Fall-troops is ugly. Air-jumpers is frivolous and sounds entomological. Air-troops is possible, but the non-commissioned ranks of the R.A.F., and the officers (in bulk) are often called "the troops," so it might be confusing.

**HOW THE GERMAN PARACHUTISTS WORK WHEN ONCE THEY HAVE LANDED:** As the men descend, their equipment is also parachuted to the ground in special containers. This was the procedure adopted in Holland by the Germans. The men gather round the containers, and whilst some stand on guard, the others assemble their machine-guns and ammunition ready to repel attack from the ground forces




**CARE MUST BE TAKEN OF THE SLIP-STREAM WHEN THE PARACHUTIST LEAVES THE AIRCRAFT:** A very important point is the effect of the slip-stream from the airscrews. To make a successful descent by parachute, the soldiers concerned must avoid the disastrous effects of being caught up in these very powerful currents

**Teaching Landing.**—Even by the time these notes appear our official people will hardly have issued descriptions of how we train our parachutists. As so often happens, the Russians started the idea—fortunately the Russians have that ape-like quality of catching hold of something, behaving to it as if human, and then incontinently losing interest in it, or throwing it away. So nothing they do is done well, except under foreign supervision. Which is fortunate, for if they had German thoroughness and the English talent for improvisation they would soon own the earth.

The Russian method of training was to drop pupils at increasing speeds, in parachute harness, down the inside of a sort of steel tower—rather like dropping down a lift-shaft. The last drops were done with real air-borne parachutes which were kept distended, or extended, on a sort of umbrella-frame. And the pupil had to start the drop himself by pulling a catch.

Being Russian and life being cheap, more or less as in Germany, the last stages of training were (or are) marching pupils out of troop-carriers into the wide-open air. I believe that in Russia, and in Germany, the parachutists do not themselves pull the cord which releases the parachute, the cord is attached to the machine, and so the act of jumping pulls the parachute out of its pack. Which is what old man Calthrop used to do with the Guardian Angel parachutes used by our balloon-observers. It saved dozens, perhaps hundreds, of lives. But the Royal Aircraft Factory would not allow it on aeroplanes—except for spy-dropping, when the pilot remained to hold the machine straight—because the cord might catch in something and either pull the man down with the machine, or fail to open the parachute. Which mattered such a lot, considering that the man was dead anyway, whether his parachute did not open or he had no parachute. So he would have welcomed even an odds-against chance of its opening.

Some three or four years ago a bright U.S.Anian built a couple of parachute towers alongside a popular motor road and gave parachute drops at so many cents. a time. The victims were hauled up, in the harness, by a winch driven by a time-expired Ford motor, and the winch just spun idle during the drop. A jolly sport, do you not think? The death-rate has not been recorded.

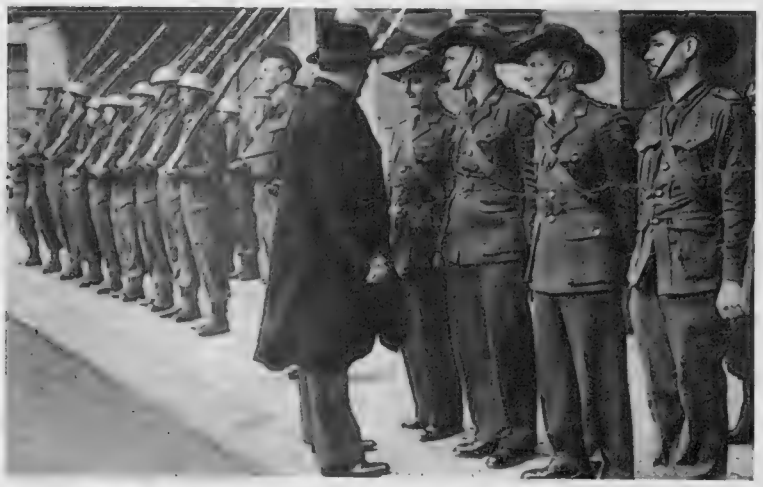
# THE NATION'S LEADERS: And the Nation's Defence Plans

THE PRIME MINISTER STILL KEEPS A WATCHFUL EYE ON OUR COAST DEFENCES : Accompanied by Sir Alan Brooke, Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces, and by Captain Margesson, Secretary of State for War, Mr. Winston Churchill has just paid another visit of inspection to our South Coast defences. Here he witnessed demonstrations by the troops in the presence of senior Naval and Army officers

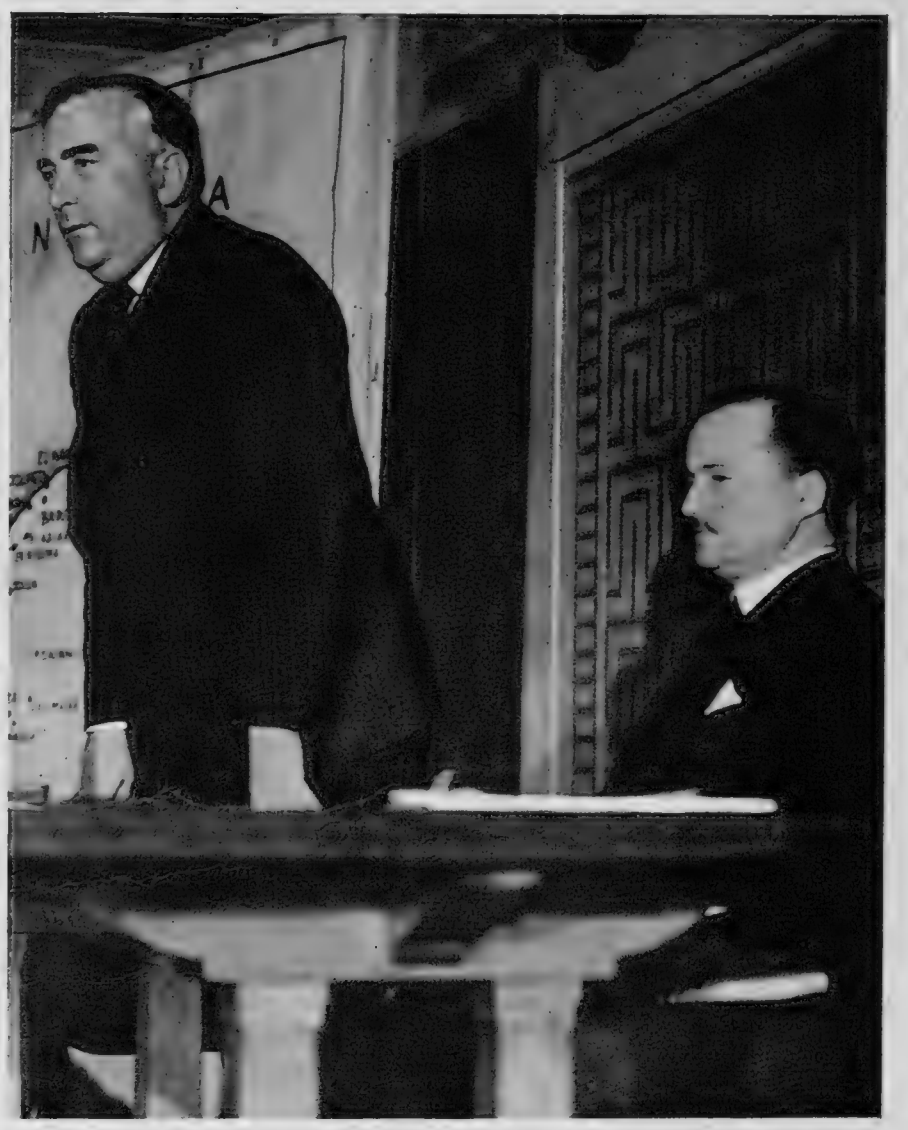
THE PRIME MINISTER WITH THE CANADIAN FORCES : With Lieut.-General A. G. L. McNaughton, Commander of the Canadian Corps, studying a military map during the Premier's visit to the Corps Headquarters. Mr. Churchill has displayed great energy during recent months in making sure that our defences against the enemy's attempts at invasion are sound and well-founded

LORD GORT VISITS NORTHERN IRELAND : Inspector-General of Training since his return from Dunkirk, Lord Gort has recently paid a visit to Northern Ireland. During his tour of inspection he visited various military training centres and units : here he is seen participating in a military manœuvre as passenger in a Bren-gun carrier—a novel method of transport for a Field Marshal !

CAPTAIN BALFOUR WITH THE MEN WHO WILL FLY AGAINST THE NAZIS : The Under-Secretary of State for Air recently visited an Initial Training Wing of the R.A.F., to observe at first hand the thorough training given to the men who will soon be flying against the enemy. Here Captain Harold Balfour is seen trying his hand at clay-pigeon shooting



THE AUSTRALIAN PREMIER INSPECTING THE HOME GUARD AND AUSTRALIAN TROOPS ON HIS ARRIVAL AT THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION IN LONDON



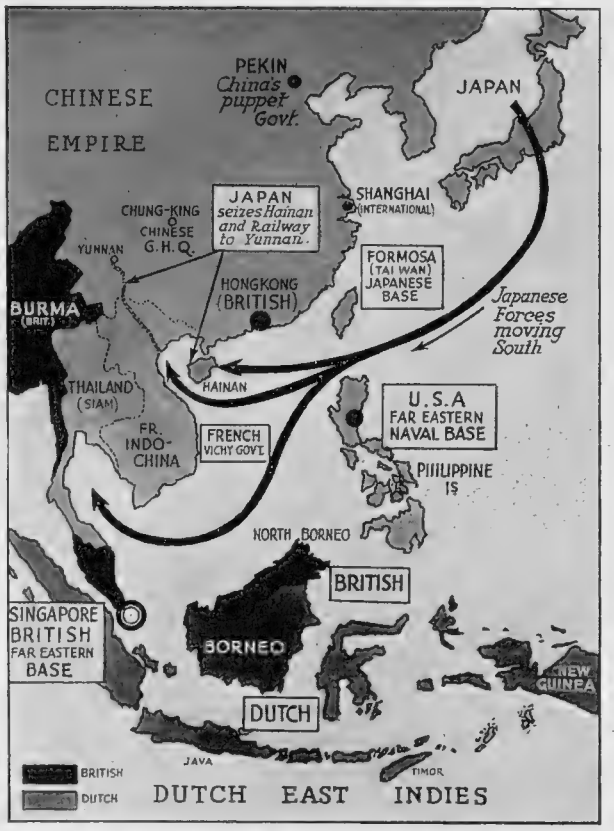
THE AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER IN LONDON : Mr. Robert Gordon Menzies, the Australian Premier, has arrived in London for consultations with the British Government : his first official visit was to the Ministry of Information, where he addressed representatives of the World's Press. This picture was taken during his speech : on the right is Mr. Duff Cooper, Minister of Information

# SINGAPORE PREPARES FOR DEFENCE

TWENTY years ago it was decided to make Singapore into a great naval base, ready to be used by the warships in the Far East for refitting. Work has been carried on ever since (except for a short period during one British Administration) till now Singapore possesses formidable defences, with batteries of great range and power, and docks capable of holding the largest vessels. It is of immense importance at the present moment, owing to its proximity to the Dutch East Indies and the Philippine Islands, neither of which possesses a naval base of such dimensions or strength.

Not only is it a great naval base, but it is also a highly developed air base, from which the R.A.F. patrol the long coast line of the Malay peninsula and the islands. Apart from the aerodromes on the island of Singapore, there are many others on the mainland; in fact, there is no lack of this essential requirement for the Air Force. There are many civilian flying clubs which are supplying a Volunteer Air Force. Many units of the Royal Australian Air Force are now stationed at Singapore, and are proving themselves of first-rate quality.

Singapore became a British possession in 1819, when Sir Stamford Raffles took it from some buccaneers who were using it as a depot. There were scarcely any residents on the island at the time, but shortly after the British arrived, traders appeared also, and it rapidly became a centre for trade, being at the entrance to the China Sea. As usual, it had been the idea of gaining security for the British trade routes which had induced the British Government to acquire the island of




**THE STRATEGICS OF THE SITUATION IN THE FAR EAST:** Japan has already intervened at Hainan Island and has seized the Yunnan Railway. Now she is attempting to intervene in Thailand and French Indo-China. But her real objective is thought to be the rich Dutch East Indies: to gain her ends, however, she has to reckon with our immensely strong fortress of Singapore—and also with the United States. The latter have shown that they are not likely to acquiesce in any further aggression on the part of Japan. To face united action on the part of both Britain and America may deter the Japs from hasty action in a situation fraught with danger for them

## BRITAIN'S STRONGHOLD AGAINST AGGRESSION IN THE FAR EAST—*Special "Sphere" Section*

Singapore and the other small islands fringing the Malay peninsula. Though only 27 miles long and 14 miles wide, Singapore now has nearly a million inhabitants, and its quays and docks are crowded with vessels from all parts, being loaded up with tea, copper, rubber, spices, rice, etc.

For the first months of the present war, right up almost to midsummer, Singapore had a quiet time which was used to continue the defences of the island. The closing of the Burma Road to supplies for China was deeply regretted, and its reopening in October was received with general satisfaction. The Press openly rejoiced. "At long last," wrote the *Straits Times*, "appeasement has been abandoned. . . . The temporary closing of the Burma Road was a sorry episode, but now we can hold up our heads once more"—and it went on to query the propriety of the continued export of supplies of rubber, tin and iron ore from Malaya to Japan.

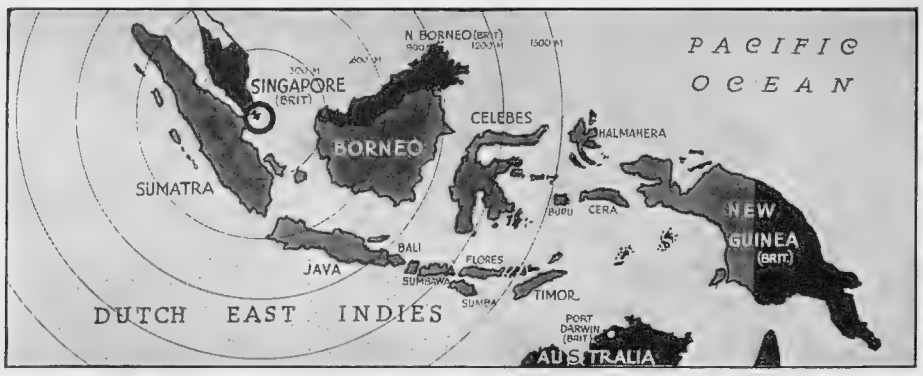
But with the growing aggression of Japan, and her alliance with the Axis Powers, Singapore has become more and more drawn into the possibility of war, for which she is now fully prepared. Japan having been granted, under Hitler's disposal of the earth's surface, the overlordship of Asia, she is impatient to secure her heritage, and looks covetously at the Dutch East Indies. Those islands are rich in all the things she so much needs. Taking advantage of the collapse of France, Japan has forced French Indo-China to allow her the use of all the aerodromes and naval bases in the territory, which brings Japanese warships into waters they were seldom seen in before, and within easy striking distance of the Dutch possessions. Singapore is also much desired, and if only it is possible to keep the United States out of the conflict, by threats

(*Continued on following page*)

**HOW AN AMERICAN JOURNAL VIEWS THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO SINGAPORE: THIS PICTURE WAS PUBLISHED RECENTLY IN THE NEW YORK MAGAZINE "LIFE" WITH THE COMMENT PUBLISHED BELOW:**

"No convulsion in history has ever dimly approached the world-wide war that would be under way if Japan plus Germany plus Italy should attack the U.S. and Great Britain. The latter two have the advantage in both ships and bases. In a war in the Pacific the U.S. would probably supply the ships, England the bases. Chief of these bases is Singapore, shown above, to which the British would retire in force if they were pushed out of Hong Kong. Great advantage of Singapore, squatting powerfully at the cross-roads of all eastern sea lanes, is that it is a thousand miles from any potential enemy's bases. A jungle island shaped like a maple leaf, at the very tip of the Malay Peninsula, Singapore (Malay for Lion City) can never be taken by surprise. It is the most strongly fortified base in the world, heavily garrisoned and well supplied with planes and anti-aircraft. Its entire ocean front is ringed with machine-gun nests and its 18-in. guns can fire over a 25-mile circle. Theoretically, it is the ideal naval base, for it has two exits. But the backdoor exit shown above is blocked by the shallow mud of the strait and by the concrete causeway to the rice plantations of Johore. The channel at upper right was cleared by immense dredges that clawed at its gluey mud until there was room for a gigantic dry-dock and one floating-dock. If the Japanese, whose Foreign Minister now calls them 'a race rolled into a ball of fire and sweeping everything before it," should take Singapore, they would dominate a third of the world. The Tokyo Press accuses U.S. of 'extending its grip on Singapore.' And Japanese well remember that when the U.S. cruisers visited Singapore two years ago, they were warmly greeted by officers of his Majesty's Navy with toasts inviting them to return when they wanted to"

**PART OF THE WATERFRONT AT SINGAPORE, SHOWING THE MAGNIFICENCE OF ITS COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS (in the centre is Clifford's Pier, seen in closer detail i harbour in the Malayan scene gives it the great strategic importance it now possesses in the Far East**




**SINGAPORE IN ITS RELATION TO THE DUTCH EAST INDIES AND TO AUSTRALIA :** Herein lies the reason for Japan's move to the south—in the Islands of the Dutch East Indies are treasures which Japan has long coveted. But to reach them she has first to subdue Singapore : she also menaces Australia the nearer she comes to that mighty continent. As distances are so great in these regions we have indicated these by means of 300-mile circles

It was only in 1819 that the seaport of Singapore was founded : the island was sold t the British in 1824 by the Sultan of Johore. To-day Singapore is the chief commercia emporium of South-Eastern Asia, and a port of the highest strategic importance. I lies on the island of the same name at the tip of the Malay Peninsula—27 miles lon and 14 miles broad : Its population is somewhere around the 700,000 mark, and abou half are Chinese. Its docks are amongst the finest in the world, and the Naval Bas is one of the world's strongest. The magnificence of its public buildings is one of th most remarkable things in connection with this great British island fortress

**THE BOAT QUAY, CROWDED WITH NATIVE SHIPPING, ADJACENT TO THE PORT :** It will be remembered that Great Britain recently offered to share the fac ities o Singapore with the United States Navy. In the event of war in the Far East thi offer would undoubtedly be taken up

**THE MODERNITY OF SINGAPORE : A VIEW OF CLIFFORD'S PIER :** This huge modern pier gives a free-port welcome to small-ship passengers from Siam, Sarawak, Sumatra and French Indo-China. The pier looks out seawards to the wide open roadstead

**THE HEART OF SINGAPORE—THE SCENE IN RAFFLES SQUARE :** The name o Sir Stamford Raffles, the founder of modern Singapore, is aptly commemorated i the business heart of this great city of the Orient

## BRITAIN'S STRONGHOLD IN MALAYA

*(Continued from preceding page)*

Japan hopes to recover something to repay her emptied coffers drained by the long-drawn-out war with China. America has not been impressed by the threatening tone of the Japanese Government, and has only responded by sending submarines and bombers to Singapore, which she is now permitted to use as a base. Japan possesses a great superiority of naval bases, whereas the U.S.A. Fleet is separated from the Philippines by an enormous distance—the nearest being at Pearl Harbour, in the Hawaiian Islands, 4,764 miles away.

Whether Japan will risk war with the U.S.A. and Great Britain is uncertain, but Singapore is leaving nothing to doubt, is prepared to the uttermost, determined to hold out. Mr. Winston Churchill promised the newly-appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Far East, Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, "a steady flow of men and munitions to the Far East," and this promise is already being fulfilled. Aircraft, Air Force personnel, together with Indian infantry, artillery, engineer and auxiliary units have already arrived, adding to the large garrison force already stationed in Malaya. Mixing up with Sikhs and Punjabis are some of the finest British regiments. There are also Volunteer troops, and a Local Defence Corps has been trained. Much is thought of the Malay Regiment, the men having proved quick at learning to use all the newest weapons, keen on smartness of appearance, and particularly useful in jungle warfare. The narrow neck of land which makes up the mainland of Malaya, held by Rajahs under British protection, consists largely of forest-covered mountains, through which there are few roads. This forms a natural protection against any attempt at invasion, but the new Governor, Sir Shenton Thomas, has seen that the whole mainland is put into a state of defence.

Malaya has not only been busily occupied with the matter of defence, with shore batteries, barbed wire on the beaches, pill-boxes, search-lights, and all that makes for efficient strength, but has made munificent free gifts to the British Treasury, of no less than £5,250,000 for the prosecution of the war.

*On right—*

**SINGAPORE'S LINK WITH THE MAINLAND :** This is the Johore Causeway, which connects the island on which Singapore is situated with the State of Johore. It is this causeway which, in the large diagram-map reproduced on the preceding page, is described as "The Backdoor to the Singapore Defences"

he bottom left-hand picture on this page). The position of the

AIRCRAFT OF THE R.A.F. FLYING OVER THE BUSINESS SECTION OF SINGAPORE DURING MANŒUVRES: This picture shows the same scene as that in the larger picture on the left

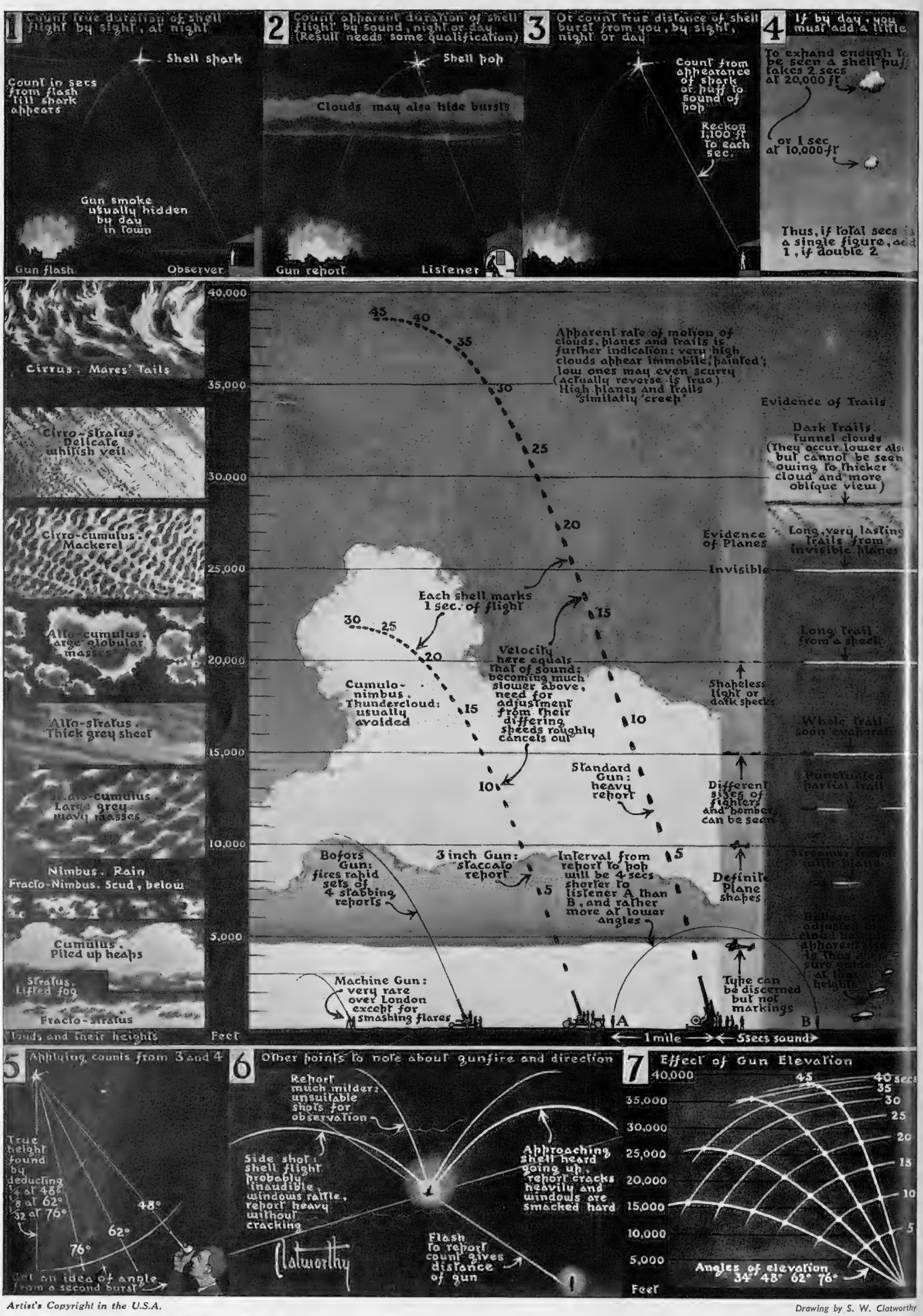
INDIAN TROOPS IN SINGAPORE: A section of a Mountain Regiment, pa[rt] of the garrison of the town, getting ready to put a howitzer into action during recent exercises in the city

THE WONDERFUL NEW CIVIL AIRPORT: UNTIL QUITE RECENTLY THIS REGION WAS BUT A SNAKE-INFESTED SWAMP: A few days ago the Government announced that a large area off the south-eastern tip of the Malay Peninsula was dangerous to navigation. "Mines will be laid in the area without further notice," stated the Admiralty, "and vessels wishing to pass through must apply to the British naval authorities at Singapore for a route." Any vessel disregarding these instructions will do so at its risk and peril. Mines in this area form a barrier against shipping approaching Singapore on a direct route from ports in Thailand, China, French Indo-China and Japan



DEFENCE AGAINST ENEMY AIR ATTACK: One of the many anti-aircraft guns stationed at strategic points around the city

THE BRITISH NAVAL BASE WHICH WILL BE SHARED WITH THE U.S.A. IN THE EVENT OF WAR: This is a general view of Fort Canning, showing warships in the waters below. The fort crowns a hill 156 ft. above the city. The defences of Singapore are deemed to be so considerable that it is almost impregnable. Huge sums of money have been lavished on these over a long period of time—not for offensive purposes, but for the defence of the considerable British interests in the Far East. With static defences—as well as those supplied by the British Navy and the Royal Air Force—the Japs will have a very tough proposition in Singapore in the event of war




*Artist's Copyright in the U.S.A.*

*Drawing by S. W. Clatworthy*

**THE HEIGHT OF ENEMY RAIDERS DURING BOMBING ATTACKS:** A SERIES OF DRAWINGS WHICH SHOW HOW IT IS POSSIBLE TO GAUGE THE HEIGHT OF THE AIRCRAFT FROM SHELL-BURSTS, CLOUD FORMATIONS AND EXHAUST TRAILS *(See notes in next column for a full explanation)*

# The HEIGHT of ← ENEMY RAIDERS

*Readers who studied the special diagram given in the issue of* THE SPHERE *of February 1, under the title of "The German Bomber and You," will remember that a time chart was given whereby a listener could gauge the distance away from him at which a bomb would fall. This chart, it was stated at the time in Section 13, would be modified by the height at which the bomber was travelling. The artist gives here a number of means by which the reader can form an opinion as to this necessary factor in bomb observation*

READERS will have noted, in our previous diagrams, how much conclusions depend upon the height at which raiders are operating. This set shows how heights may be estimated with sufficient accuracy without trouble.

Gunfire is easily the most valuable guide, and, paradoxically, it is better by night than by day. The comparatively slow travel of sound—roughly one mile in five seconds—is the useful factor. Light, for all practical purposes, is seen instantaneously. You can test your counting of seconds by the seconds hand on your watch.

Sketch 1 gives a simple method when you are able to see what is happening. If you are satisfied that the gun is firing at a high elevation—there are hints on this in later sketches—you can find your seconds total on the trajectories in the large diagram and read off the corresponding height. It is better also to consider whether the gun report is the bark of the older 3-in., which has a ceiling in the lower 20,000's, or the deeper bay of the more usual 3·7-in., or majestic 4·5, which can fire right up to the so-called stratosphere.

If you observe the relative positions of gun flash and shell spark and, taking Sketch 6, note which set of conditions apply, you will gain an idea of the angle of elevation in use. You may then need to modify the first estimate as in Sketch 7, which gives readings at four different angles.

Sketch 2 method is for hearing alone, and can be used always. Here, however, the same seconds' count may not be taken at once as the same length of flight. If the gun is firing away from you that would sound longer than if it were firing towards you, as again indicated in the large diagram. Sketch 6 shows how you may decide readily in this case which direction applies.

repeat count as in Sketch 2 will reward you with a distinct feeling of cleverness when the "pop" agai duly registers at your chosen second.

tetches 3 and 4 need no comment, except that clou cover often bars their use.

No. 5, after a count as No. 3, you will need a second spark to study the desired angle. The puff will wait for you by day. After trying No. 5, you may probably be more chary in future of what you describe as "nearly overhead."

nsideration of Nos. 5 and 6 matters less the furt er you are; and both flashes and sparks can be en at considerable distances.

No. 6, you can identify your neighbouring gun by their apparent position and distance, and bec ne acquainted with their "registrations." Inci entally, projectiles in flight make a variety of nois s. They are quite unlike bomb noises, but, if in d ubt, remember that they begin clearly and fade, a bo nb doing the reverse. Also, of course, the loud ban comes first, not last, as with the bomb.

cidentally also, falling shell fragments make an ngaging variety of sounds. It apparently dep ds on their irregular jagged shapes and sizes and whether or not they are spinning.

rning to the large diagram, the type of gun in action is itself a first indication of the raider's heig t. Other aids are also shown here. Clouds, usua ly readily recognisable, even in transition from one type to another, up or down, give a lower limit to the height in question. Incidentally, they are also some indication of the likelihood of raids. Alto-cumulus is ideal cover for the London attacks and has helped to make heights of round about 20,000 ft. so prevalent. Cirro-cumulus lacks clear gaps of satisfactory size. Cirro-stratus is too high for big laden bombers and cirrus itself is out of the question, despite stratosphere legends. Hiding in the tops of cumulus is barred by the balloons.

Concerning Trails, a fine example of the uncommon dark trail showed during the second Alert on the night of February 15. It was in cirro-stratus, going south-east, probably made by a decamping unloaded raider, though possibly a night-fighter was responsible. There is much evidence of the latter of late, but even this snag carries its implications.

The artist's own longest shell-flight count has been 46 seconds. The only cloud was a light veiling of cirro-stratus, the raider a lone one, probably not a big bomber. The angle was about 60 deg., the inferred height some 32,000 ft.

Counts of about 20, with heights of 20,000 to 25,000 ft.—just above alto-cumulus—have been far the most frequent over London at night; but single raiders (true "waves" are impossible at night, when formation cannot be kept) at different heights, apparently timed to arrive together from some three different directions, presumably to complicate A.-A. fire, have been noted recently.

# BRITISH SEAMEN MAROONED in the PACIFIC

ON EMIRAU ISLAND: LOOKING ALONG THE FORESHORE, SHOWING THE IMPROMPTU HUTS MADE BY THE SEAMEN ASSISTED BY THE NATIVES. (This picture was taken by a member of the "Rangitane's" crew)

THIS IS HOW THE VICTIMS OF THE GERMAN RAIDER LIVED IN ROUGHLY-CONSTRUCTED HUTS ON THE BEACH AT EMIRAU, AFTER THEIR MAROONING ON THE ONE-TIME CANNIBAL ISLAND

MR. AND MRS. COOK (ON RIGHT), IN CHARGE OF THE ISLAND, LEAVE WITH A KANAKA CREW IN THEIR LAUNCH FOR KAVIEANG, WHERE HELP FOR THE SEAMEN WAS OBTAINED

ON ARRIVAL AT SYDNEY: BEARDED MEMBERS OF THE CREW OF THE "RANGITANE" GIVEN SANDWICHES AS THEY ARRIVE AT THE SYDNEY CENTRAL STATION

BOAT-LOADS OF THE MERCHANTMEN SURVIVORS BEING HAULED TOWARDS THE SHIP WHICH TOOK THEM OFF EMIRAU ISLAND

A few weeks ago, some 330 victims of a German raider in the Pacific arrived back at Sydney after their rescue from the island of Emirau in the Bismarck Archipelago. The men had been taken prisoners from various ships which the raider had sunk: they were afterwards marooned on what had once been a cannibal island. As soon as the news of their plight reached Australia, units of the Royal Australian Navy arrived at Emirau and took the castaways off. They were landed at a Northern Australian port, and then conveyed in special trains to Sydney, where they were met by the Governor-General and Lady Gowrie

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

# BOOKS FOR THE STORY-LOVER

*Robert Graves and Sergeant Lamb; Peter Cheyney's Tough Detectives; Jerome Weidman's Horse; and Two Lady Novelists*

THOSE who have read Mr. Robert Graves' *Sergeant Lamb of the Ninth*, will pleasantly anticipate the sequel and conclusion to the fictionised story of that remarkable character published now under the title of **PROCEED, SERGEANT LAMB** (Methuen. 8s. 6d.). In a foreword, Mr. Graves reveals how he has been able to pick this story from a mass of contemporary records, British, American, French and German, supplemented by Lamb's own Journal and Memoirs, published in Dublin in 1809. Readers of the previous book will need no inducement to go for this one, but it is also fair to say that those who have not will be under no handicap in the enjoyment of *Proceed, Sergeant Lamb*.

The story opens in a prison camp near Boston, where Lamb, with three thousand others of General Burgoyne's army, is awaiting repatriation. Congress, however, were making difficulties, and together with some comrades Lamb determines to escape. Travelling by night, and threading his way through Washington's lines, he manages to rejoin the British forces at New York.

Thereupon he finds himself no longer of the Ninth Foot, but is posted to the Twenty-Third, which regiment, as every drummer-boy knows, is now the Royal Welch Fusiliers. From then on Lamb forays, fights, starves and generally engages in terrific adventures under Lord Cornwallis. He manages to be everything by turn from a Standard-Bearer to a Surgeon, and from a Troop Sergeant in a mounted infantry detachment to a confidential clerk to the General.

When disaster overcame Cornwallis, and ended in his capitulation at Yorktown, the indomitable Lamb once more made his escape, this time in even more remarkable circumstances. Suffering terribly from wounds and from fatigue, half-starved and ragged, he made his way across a thousand miles of hostile territory back to New York.

Making free use of his hero's own records, Mr. Robert Graves reveals Lamb to be something more than the ordinary hard-bitten, swashbuckling soldier of fortune. He had, for instance, more than an ordinary eye for geographical detail, for natural history and for the manners and customs of the people among whom he was moving. The result is a very interesting, if circumstantial picture of life in the American colonies during the War of Revolution. Incidentally, the background of the story concerns a period in British history which is not without interest to-day. In 1780, Britain was fighting single-handed, not only the thirteen revolting colonies, but the French, Dutch and Spanish; while nearly all the rest of Europe, including Russia, Prussia and Turkey, was leagued against her in the Armed Neutrality.

Mr. Robert Graves has more than once demonstrated his ability to clothe the record and background of history with reality, and to bring authentic figures from the past into a living story. *Proceed, Sergeant Lamb* is as thrilling and fine a book as either of the Claudius volumes, which, as everyone knows, were very good indeed.

Detective-story addicts will also need no introduction to Mr. Peter Cheyney, nor to the characters of Lemmy Caution and Slim Callaghan. **MISTER CAUTION—MISTER CALLAGHAN** (Collins. 7s. 6d.) is a volume of short stories divided equally in proportions of twelve apiece to each of these famous detectives.

Slim Callaghan, I should remind you, is an English detective working on his own with all the assurance and aplomb of a Sherlock Holmes. Being short stories, his adventures are naturally episodic, and may not contain just that moment of suspense and surprise which the detective story addict seems to demand. All the same, they leave nothing in doubt, on the score of ingenuity, of Mr. Cheyney or of the ubiquitous omniscience of Mr. Callaghan.

Lemmy Caution, on the other hand, is an American, addicted to telling his adventures in the first person singular and in the kind of picturesque slang which is supposed to be current in Chicago and its environs. Those acquainted with American slang, and particularly with its up-to-date manifestations may find Mr. Lemmy Caution's expressions rather strange, not to say quaint. He serves, however, as an example of an Englishman's view of the kind of bibful the tough guys in these stories are liable to spill at any moment.

I wish Mr. Peter Cheyney would study the modern Cockney type-whose speech is every bit as pictur, esque and terse, and upon the accuracy of which it is unlikely he would go wrong.

Incidentally, the women in these stories are, almost without exception, apt to enjoy a physical appearance which is calculated to bowl over any crook, policeman or detective with whom they come into contact. They are all beautifully and expensively dressed, and inclined to knock the boys for a loop with their subtle perfumes. The gentlemen, on the other hand, appear to be inveterate cigarette smokers, and much addicted to the practice of ejecting a thin stream of smoke from one nostril. I should add that this remarkable feat is performed most efficiently on both sides of the Atlantic.

Mr. Jerome Weidman will be remembered as the author of *I Can Get It For You Wholesale*, which no less a critic than Miss Rebecca West declared was the best novel she had read for some years. Mr. Weidman is a notable author of the tough-guy American school, and in so far as he uses slang—and he uses plenty of it—it can be regarded as authentic as anything produced by Mr. Damon Runyon.

**THE HORSE THAT COULD WHISTLE "DIXIE"** (Heinemann. 8s.) is a collection of short stories, and as such has all the advantages and disadvantages attendant upon such a collection. In a frank and disarming preface, Mr. Weidman points to the disadvantages from which a short-story writer who assembles his work between the covers of a book suffers. They were, he says, written over a period of five years, and scattered through a dozen magazines.

He goes on to say that he started to write short stories because he had wanted to write novels, and it seemed more intelligent to begin practising with a form that could be handled in a few pages. He was wrong, of course.

All of which goes to prove that Mr. Weidman takes himself seriously as a writer, and while it is true that none of these stories is outstanding, it is also true to say that some of them are very good indeed.

Miss E. M. Ward begins **APPLEDORE BAY** (Methuen. 8s. 6d.) with the translation of two middle-aged spinsters from the London house which they could no longer afford to run, to a Bayswater Hotel, where they are thrown into the company of the kind of people who used to live in such residential hotels. Later on it becomes apparent that Miss Ward has only thus whetted the reader's appetite in order to introduce a number of characters who will later on be moved to the old family mansion in Kent which the two sisters decide to run on a paying-guest basis.

The real story is that of Prudence Goodey, who fell in love with, and married, a self-centred young man who wrote original stories under the name of O. John. Prudence can be quite independent in her own right, but in deference to O. John, whose idea of a wife was that she should be dependent on him, she gave it all up and went to live and cook and drudge for him in his cottage on Romney Marsh. The inevitable triangle is completed with the appearance of a flipperty-gibbet called Doodles, whose only object in life appears to be to make Prudence unhappy, and to collar O. John for herself.

I could not have got very far with this story had it not been that I have a personal interest in the country in and around Romney Marsh, in which it is set. On the whole, it is a very innocuous and undistinguished piece of work, but pleasant enough in its way.

The same can be said of **STUPIDITY'S HARVEST**, by Mary Mitchell (Methuen. 8s.). I am afraid that all the humour and sparkle of this author's first novel, *A Warning to Wantons*, is missing in this book. How often does it happen that the author of a "best seller" fails to ring the bell at a second attempt. It is a pity—but there it is! In this book Miss Mitchell asks us to believe that the beautiful blonde Caroline could indeed wreak havoc on the lives of her husband, her children and the people of her household through her insensitiveness, possessiveness and insensate jealousies. Half-way through the book she dies a bloody death, in circumstances which almost every reader will agree are well merited.

But Caroline dead is even more potent a force for trouble and tragedy than she was when she was alive. The police have to be satisfied that the verdict of accidental death was indeed the true one, and everybody has to suffer in consequence.

Book "jackets" are quite a feature nowadays: this novel boasts a really remarkable one, wherein a lady in full evening dress is depicted standing upon what appears to be the edge of the Sahara Desert.

**A BUSY TIME FOR THE SEVERN BASKET-MAKERS: CRAFTSMEN AT THEIR WORK BY THE RIVERSIDE**

**GATHERING UP THE WITHIES FOR BASKET-MAKING IN SOMERSET:** Now that baskets cannot be imported from abroad, and foreign competition has thus been eliminated, the Somerset withy-growers are busier than ever. There is a heavy demand for these baskets at the moment to take the place of boxes for various purposes. The Severn-side basket-makers are consequently having a busy time—more so than for many years past. The withies actually grow on the river banks and in large quantities. Owing to the scarcity of labour, mothers are now working with the basket-makers—and tending their children at the same time

**ANOTHER SCENE ON THE RIVER SEVERN—THE OPENING OF THE SALMON SEASON:** Fishing with "draft" nets has started near Tewkesbury. The nets are dragged down the river and finally hauled in by winch. Many journeys are made without a catch, but when this picture was taken the men were rewarded with a fish weighing 20 lb. It was the first for many trawls! Owing to labour shortage, this is probably the only net being worked this year

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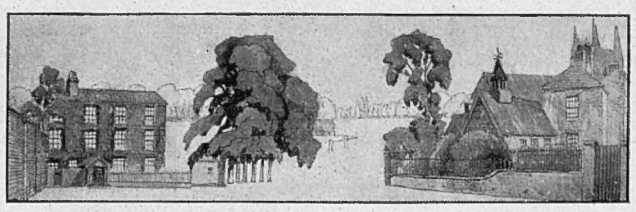
**THE DRAWING UPON WHICH THE COMPETITION DESIGN WAS BASED :** The approach to Isleworth from the north, showing a pleasant tree-shaded residence on the left, a glimpse of the River Thames in the centre, and the parish church on the right

# THE SPHERE XMAS COMPETITION . . RESULTS . . . .

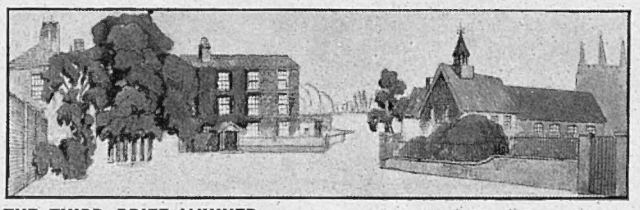
in their proper or natural positions, the composition being based on a drawing of an actual view at Isleworth, the pleasant little riverside village opposite Old Richmond Park, and backed by the grounds of Sion House. A glimpse of river was given in the background as a clue to the general arrangement of the scene. A pleasant red-brick house, largely covered with creeper, which looks as if it dated from the late eighteenth century, stands on the left, with a big clump of trees in front. Across the road leading to the main part of Isleworth is a garden with the roof and tower of Isleworth Parish Church showing beyond.

**THE FIRST PRIZE WINNER :** G. T. Quarm, of Knebworth, gains the distinction of winning first prize. His arrangement of the pieces is substantially correct as to the placing of the two main groupings of the composition



**THE SECOND PRIZE WINNER :** Alan Woodhead, of Dulnain Bridge, Grantown-on-Spey, wins second prize. His arrangement of the pieces is good with regard to the central portion of the view

A GRATIFYING number of replies came in from readers all over the United Kingdom. The wealth of replies from the Dominions, colonies and remote countries was not so much in evidence this year owing to war conditions. The problem was to take the dozen pieces given in THE SPHERE Christmas Number and arrange them



**THE THIRD PRIZE WINNER :** Miss K. Bradshaw, of Bath, wins third prize for a very good effort, but the trees have been misplaced ; otherwise to left and right the arrangement was very satisfactory

**AN INTERESTING BUT INCORRECT SOLUTION :** Miss K. Livermore made a grouping which is by no means lacking in charm, although certain pieces are evidently arbitrarily placed. Awarded a consolation prize

**ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF PLEASING COMPOSITION :** A jolly little riverside village has been evolved by J. Burton, of Belmont, Harrow. The arrangement on the right is quite happy. Awarded a consolation prize

**MISS COWELL CONSULTS HER BOSS :** John Snagge, B.B.C. Director of Presentation. He is at the head of some forty announcers. A famous broadcaster himself, he was one of the first on the staff of the British Broadcasting Corporation

**ELIZABETH COWELL, HOME ANNOUNCER :** When the B.B.C. advertised for two women announcers for the world's first television service, Miss Cowell, together with Miss Jasmine Bligh, was selected out of 1,100 applicants. When war broke out and this service came to an end she joined the W.A.A.F., but later the B.B.C. applied for her release and made her the first woman radio announcer for six years. So great was Miss Cowell's success that already a number of additional women announcers have been engaged. Like other announcers, she writes her own announcements and makes up her own gramophone recitals. She also runs a special feature called "To You From Me," a musical series broadcast once a month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# In Quest of Good Hotels

By ASHLEY COURTENAY

THE mentality of the correspondent who remains anonymous is one of fear. Either he fears the consequences because his words are libellous or it is just a case of having "a bee in his bonnet," and he fears that, given the opportunity, his distorted opinions would be dissolved by the reasonings put forward by his recipient.

Recently one of my readers has been writing to me from different parts of the country on what he has termed "the scramble for safety," and as there is a good deal of truth wrapped up in his effusions I would dearly like to have known my correspondent's address, so that he could be encouraged to cultivate once more kindly thoughts towards his fellow-creatures. He writes as follows:

"It is difficult nowadays for bona fide travellers to find a bed in areas where bombing is rare. These hotels are overfilled with refugees who have fled from nothing. They sit and read and knit, eat and drink, and get no nearer to the war than the news they read in the newspapers, which often have been printed amid and transported through a hail of bombs. There they sit, and sleep after eating a dinner of soup, fish, joint, sweets, savoury, wine and coffee, and three other meals on the same scale daily—or, if a stray bomb should fall, they would load a motor-car with food, etc., and take themselves off. If these people were typical, the 'Battle of Britain' would be over by now."

Fortunately (we will call my correspondent Mr. A.) such people are not typical, and I cannot see the few jitterbugs who do exist being able to "load a motor-car with food and take themselves off." Where 's the petrol coming from? For, as you must realise, Mr. A., they will need a great deal of it, seeing that they will be in exactly the same predicament as you are—unable to get a bed anywhere! Then, where is the food coming from? Shopping means searching these days. It is a case of "May I have?" not "I will have." A good sermon might be delivered on the text "Lucky is he who can get one pot of marmalade—yea, even at his registered grocer." No, Mr. A., it will not work out in practice, and if it were feasible what a welcome the hotel-keeper would have for the visitors who arrived with their *own* food! *The* great problem in hotels these days is how to feed people at all.

And I am afraid this problem disposes of those dinners which are floating before Mr. A.'s distorted eyes. "Meat, fish, joint, sweets and savoury," not forgetting, too, "the wine and coffee." What days of the past and the future you are conjuring up! At our hotel we had our 1s. 2d. worth of meat last Sunday. Where *can* Mr. A. sleep and eat himself these days? For he cannot realise that fish and joint is forbidden by law, and if there is a savoury the basic ingredient — cheese — is almost always missing. And so, Mr. A., even if I could find you accommodation on your travels, as I expect I could, I am afraid you will be disappointed in not being able to witness any Bacchanalian feasts.

But where I must principally draw issue with Mr. A. is as regards the type of people who dwell in hotels these war days. He represents them as a collection of frightened rabbits, and there is nothing further from the truth. I have criticised the wartime hotel residents for their lack of appreciation of the hotel-keeper's war problems, and I shall probably have reason to do so again. But that hotel-dwellers can "take it," and have taken it as well as any other Britisher, I am convinced.

Mr. A. overlooks the fact that there is a large percentage of people who permanently lived in hotels before the war. At this time of the year they could be found in their hundreds at Bath, Cheltenham, Hastings and St. Leonard's, Bexhill, Eastbourne, and a dozen and more other places which are no longer available to them in any degree.

Of necessity, they have invaded Mr. A.'s pet domains. To their ranks have been added a large number of people who have been bombed out. Homes, furniture, personal treasures have been destroyed. Hotels, to them, were not their choice, but a necessity. Then I also find in hotels a sprinkling of wives with young children, whose husbands are on Service. The war to most hotel residents is as difficult for them as it is for Mr. A. There is little they can do beyond knitting, *and* the output per week from hotels must be prodigious.

And so you see, Mr. A., we must live and let live. If these few notes catch your eye I should be glad to help you in your wanderings. But do not forget to take your traveller's ration book with you, as I should hate you to be deprived of your 1s. 2d. worth of meat should you happen to overstay your time. I repeat "overstay," because I am fully aware of the fact that, provided you do not stay more than five days anywhere, you are a bona fide traveller, and so you can probably get meat *every* day—not forgetting, of course, the rations which you get through your traveller's ration book to help augment the week-end feast at home!

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

*K. M. H., Thirsk.*—Like so many correspondents, you omit the all-important information as regards terms. For plenty to occupy your time you could not do better than the Grand, Torquay: Charles Reade, the late Queen's "pro." to polish up your squash, Harry Evans and his dance band to bring brightness into the black-out, and a chef who can perform miracles — I almost added, out of nothing.

*A. W. C., Hampstead.*—You are wise to look well ahead for the family holiday in July. A really quiet, sandy spot in North Cornwall is Harlyn Bay. Here there is a choice of Yellow Sands Hotel, Lower Pol Mark Hotel, or the Waterbeach Hotel at Treyarnon Bay. You need not look beyond these hotels.

*H. S., London.*—You have given me rather a poser. Between Cardiff and Swansea there is little beyond the Esplanade at Penarth. You might also consider the Brig-y-don at Ogmore-on-Sea.

*C. K., Torbay.*—Unless you must be on high ground you will not find anything more suitable than Harleyford Manor, on the banks of the Thames, outside Marlow. It is the Guest House Superb. And you will be fortunate indeed if you can get in there.

*Mr. Ashley Courtenay is always pleased to advise "Sphere" readers of hotels, both large and small, known to him personally. Letters, accompanied by a 2½d. stamp for reply, should be addressed to him, c/o the Editor,* THE SPHERE, *32-34, St. Bride Street, London, E.C.4. Personal and telephone inquiries, however, cannot be accepted.*

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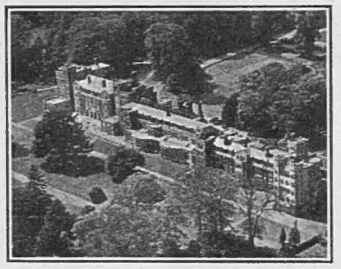

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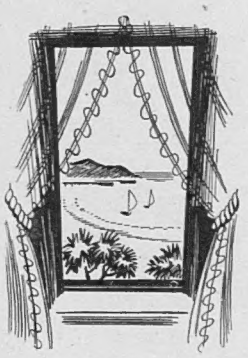

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